DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 357 767 IR 054 579

AUTHOR Doyle, Robert P.
TITLE U.S. Information Ambassadors: The 1991-92 Library Fellows and Debriefing Report.
INSTITUTION American Library Association, Chicago, Ill.
SPONS AGENCY United States Information Agency, Washington, D. C.
PUB DATE Feb 93
NOTE 39p.; Alternate pages contain white print on colored stock.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Libraries; Archives; Cultural Exchange; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; *International Programs; *Librarians; *Library Associations; Library Automation; Library Education; Library Services; National Libraries; Overseas Employment; Shared Library Resources
IDENTIFIERS *American Library Association

ABSTRACT

The American Library Association (ALA) Library Fellows program began in 1986 with a grant from the U.S. Information Agency. The program's purpose is threefold: (1) to increase international understanding through the establishment of professional and personal relationships and the accomplishment of mutual goals; (2) to promote international sharing of resources and increase access to U.S. materials in the host country; and (3) to enable U.S. librarians to enrich and broaden their career experience through a short period of overseas service. Profiles of the following fellows highlighting their overseas experiences are included: (1) Maria-Solange Macias from the Miami-Dade (Florida) Public Library System, who went to the Banco del Libro, La Paz, Bolivia; (2) Ann Montgomery Smith, from the Wentworth Institute (Massachusetts), who went to the Colegia de Bibliotecologos del Peru, Lima; (3) Jitka Hurych, from Northern Illinois University, who went to the All-State Library of Foreign Literature, Moscow, Russia; (4) Marjorie Rosenthal, from Long Island University (New York), who went to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel; (5) Sue Sherif, from Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library (Alaska), who went to the University of Iceland, Reykjavik; (6) James Moldovan, from the U.S. Court of Appeals, San Francisco (California), who went to the Central University Library, Bucharest, Romania; (7) Debra McKern, from Emory University (Georgia), who went to the National Library of Egypt in Cairo; (8) Gloria Fulton, from Humboldt State University (California), who went to the Belgrade Public Library in Serbia; (9) Deborah V. H. Abraham, from the Public Library of Brookline (Massachusetts), who went to the Indian Institute of Management; (10) Stanley A. Elman, from the Lockheed Aeronautical Systems, who went to National Library of Poland, Warsaw; and (11) Barbara Rush, from Commack (New York), who went to the Ministry of Education, Jerusalem, Israel. Alternate pages of the document are printed in red and gold and consist of brief summaries of the participant's career along with a design element. An accompanying debriefing report summarizes participants' reactions to the program. (MES)

DEBRIEFING REPORT

ED357767

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

U.S. INFORMATION AMBASSADORS

THE 1991-92 LIBRARY FELLOWS

120545

BEST COPY AVAILABLE 2

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Robert P. Doyle

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

I. Purpose of Meeting

On 20-21 November 1992, a debriefing session was held for the fifth class of the Library Fellows Program at the American Library Association (ALA) headquarters in Chicago. Ten recently returned fellows, two United States Information Agency (USIA) officers and one ALA staff member attended the session. The only fellow not present was: Barbara Rush, retired school library-media specialist and professional storyteller, Commack, N.Y. Ms. Rush worked at the Kaye Teacher's College in Beer Sheva, Israel from December 1991 through July 1992.

The debriefing provided an opportunity for the fellows to share their experiences with others who have a common base of understanding and to assess the value and effectiveness of the program. Fellows recommended means for improving the program and discussed possibilities for follow-up activities that will enable them to translate their overseas experience into continuing participation in international library affairs.

II. Participants

- Maria-Solange Macias, collection development librarian, Miami-Dade (Florida) Public Library System, fellow at the Banco del Libro, La Paz, Bolivia, from January through June 1992;
- Ann Montgomery Smith, director of libraries and curator of Special Collections, Wentworth Institute, Boston, Mass., fellow at the Colegio de Bibliotecologos del Peru, Lima, from February through July 1992;
- Jitka Hurych, head, Science and Engineering Libraries, Northern Illinois University, De Kalb, Ill., fellow to All-State Library of Foreign Literature, Moscow, Russia, from April through June 1992;
- Marjorie Rosenthal, assistant professor, Palmer School of Library and Information Science, Long Island University, fellow to The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, from October 1991 through March 1992;
- Sue Shenf, public services librarian, Fairbanks (Alaska) North Star Borough Public Library, fellow to University of Iceland, Reykjavik, from January through June 1992;
- James Moldovan, librarian, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, San Francisco, Calif., fellow to the Central University Library, Bucharest, Romania, from January through June 1992;
- Debra McKern, former preservation officer, Emory University in Atlanta, Ga., fellow to the National Library of Egypt in Cairo, from October 1991 to April 1992;
- Gloria Fulton, associate librarian, Humboldt State University in Arcata, Calif., fellow to the Belgrade Public Library in Serbia, from September 1991 to December 1991;
- Deborah V. H. Abraham, supervisor, Reference Department at the Public Library of Brookline, Mass., fellow to the Indian Institute of Management, from October 1991 through April 1992;
- Stanley Elman, retired librarian from the Lockheed Aeronautical Systems Co., fellow to National Library of Poland, Warsaw, from September 1991 to October 1992;
- Helen Amabile, deputy chief, Library Programs Division, United States Information Agency;
- Mary Boone, training/exchanges officer, Library Programs Division, United States Information Agency;
- Robert P. Doyle, director, Library Fellows Program, American Library Association.

III. Overall Assessment

The meeting successfully brought closure to the fellowships of ten individuals, all of whom were eager to share their experiences. The discussion increased the group's awareness of each person's assignment, yet also illustrated an underlying commonality of experience.

While opinions about some of the issues raised varied widely among the group, the two-day session was distinguished by a high level of agreement on the importance of the issues being addressed.

IV. Introductions

"With so many new countries still in the pioneering stages of librarianship, the Library Fellows program could grow without limits."

ALA Executive Director Peggy Sullivan opened the session on Friday, 20 November 1992 by greeting the 1991-92 Library Fellows and leading a discussion about their experiences. Recognizing that only limited information on international librarianship currently exists, Ms. Sullivan encouraged the fellows to make their experiences and the resources that they had gathered available to the U.S. library community through publishing and by participating in established international forums, such as ALA's International Relations Round Table.

Ms. Sullivan said, "I have had the opportunity to talk with library colleagues in Moscow and elsewhere who were on the receiving end of this program, and I have heard how much your efforts are appreciated. At the same time, I fully realize that you also are equal beneficiaries of this program, because when you set out to teach, you always end up learning. It is my hope that you will share what you have learned and that you will continue what you have started."

Library Fellows Program Director Robert P. Doyle then addressed the group: "This is your time to share your experiences and tell us how we can improve the program. In our discussions, please keep in mind that the program was created to promote international sharing of resources, to increase international understanding, and to enable you to enrich and broaden your career experiences. Let us know how well you believe the program has achieved these goals."

Doyle continued: "We value your comments and recommendations because this program symbolizes and promotes the basic goals of ALA — to provide leadership for the development, promotion and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship; to enhance learning and ensure access to information; and to see that libraries remain the important tools of cultural vitality, economic health and international peace we believe them to be."

V. Agenda and Discussion

The meeting's agenda was organized under the following topics: 1) Expectations and Realities; 2) Communication; 3) Culture Shock; 4) Program Evaluation; 5) Re-Entry; 6) Continuing International Involvement; 7) Proposal Solicitation; 8) Recruitment; 9) Orientation; and 10) Debriefing. A summary of questions raised and ensuing discussion on each topic follows.

Expectations and Realities

"No matter how much you've prepared, no matter how much information you've gathered, and no matter how many people you've talked with, once you are there, things are different."

When asked whether their projects were what they had expected them to be, seventy percent of the fellows indicated that their expectations were met. This is a significant improvement over past years, when there were few instances where reality matched expectations. This improvement might be attributed in part to improved communication with the host institution and USIS prior to arrival in the host country. Improvements in recruiting and orientation processes also may have contributed. However, while professional expectations were met for many, professional and personal realities did not mesh for everyone as there was a wide range in the quality and kind of professional and personal accommodations.

Project assignment. A major difficulty encountered by some fellows in starting their assignments was that the project description did not reflect the work they found waiting for them. There were several reasons this occurred. In some cases, staff at the host institution assigned to work with fellows had not been involved in development of the project or did not have the project description. In others, host institution or USIS personnel had changed or political problems within the country forced a revision of the original project.

As noted at past debriefing sessions, a common communication problem was that somewhere between the project's conception and actual implementation, communication between the host institution, USIS and fellows breaks down. Correspondence between fellows and host institutions prior to departure resolved some questions on the specifics of projects, but there were still some surprises.

Housing. As in the past, some fellows did encounter housing difficulties, and the quality of housing varied. Housing inequities between host countries were the subject of considerable discussion. In some cases, adequate or good housing was ready and waiting upon the fellow's arrival. In other cases, fellows were virtually on their own to find housing of almost any quality. While many USIS officers assisted the fellows by reviewing housing options, physically examining the proposed housing and confirming its adequacy and availability in advance to Washington, the fellows recommended that this become a requirement.

Throughout the two-day meeting, members of the group emphasized that new fellows should expect the first few weeks to be stressful. Fellows must be flexible since situations vary widely due to the local economy, political situation, availability of housing and resources of the host institution.

Communication

"You have been selected for the project because you are an expert, but you are not an expert about living in this new country. It's very difficult being a beginner and having to ask so many questions. But, those questions and that early communication are vital, enriching and critical to your success."

Advance communication with the host institution improved significantly over past years. Eighty percent of the fellows received communication from the host institution or USIS personnel prior to arrival. The communication provided additional information and helped fellows and staff from the host institution finalize arrangements so that everyone's expectations could be met.

After fellows arrived, however, there were difficulties in maintaining personal and professional communication links outside the country since the level of postal service in each country varied and because facilitative services from U.S. embassies are not sometimes available. Fellows agreed that communication with each other provided vital reinforcement before, during, and after the fellowship experience.

The group discussed at length whether fluency in the native language was necessary. Perhaps surprisingly, there were arguments for and against this requirement, both from fellows who spoke the language and those who did not. It was acknowledged that there were obvious advantages to speaking the language, but the group was divided on whether an otherwise well-qualified potential fellow should be eliminated from consideration because of a language deficiency. Some felt that professional skills and the ability to be flexible were just as or even more important.

Discussion of the final report fellows submit to USIA elicited agreement that a formal report format should be developed. Since the final report should stand alone and be a summary of the overall project, development of general guidelines and a more formal format would strengthen the reports as information and evaluation tools.

Culture Shock, Isolation, Loneliness

"Even things that look familiar may not have the same function or meaning in this new place."

Though they carefully prepared prior to departure, most of the group experienced some degree of culture shock. Separation from spouses and children understandably contributed to the stress. Visits from family and friends helped overcome feelings of loneliness and homesickness. Fellows observed that having a family member or friend to travel with made a difference. Alone, some fellows did not feel comfortable exploring different areas of the city or countryside.

Culture shock and isolation was also increased because the program continues to suffer from a lack of name recognition. The "Library Fellows Program" name is not widely recognized in the U.S. or abroad. The fellows observed that because the program's name lacks recognition, they may miss opportunities available to their counterparts in other exchange programs. Participants in more established programs, such as the Fulbright, receive automatic recognition and, in some cases, more facilitative assistance. This assistance might ease culture shock and isolation and would improve the program overall.

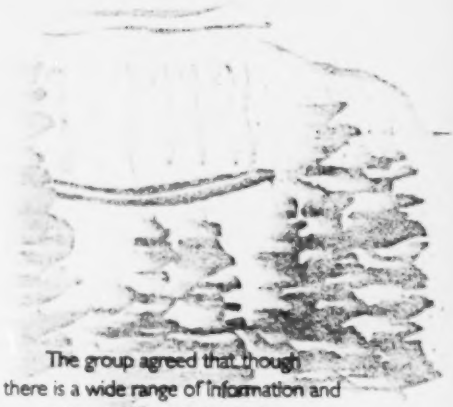
Though participants acknowledged their adjustment problems, all agreed their experience was very satisfying personally and professionally and most would welcome the opportunity to do it again.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

"Things weren't perfect but I would go back in a second."

The evaluation process is a three-part procedure requiring input from the host institution, USIS, and the fellow. Assessments from the fellows are particularly important and may be the most useful and valid of the three in terms of improving the program. Host institutions, because they are genuinely grateful for any help that was given and because they do not wish to seem unappreciative, tend to be unreservedly positive in commenting on the program. USIS officers also tend to focus on the positive in commenting on the program, probably basing their judgments on the host institution's feedback. Fellows, on the other hand, speak freely of both the good and the bad, and are also in a better position to comment on the program's value from a professional librarian's perspective, as well as from the perspective of an American living in a foreign country without the "perks" that go with serving overseas as an employee of the U.S. government.

Though the group generally approved of the existing evaluation form, they suggested that the fellows recommend to ALA and USIS possible follow-up projects. Because of their recent experience in indigenous institutions, the fellows could provide valuable suggestions on potential new projects or individuals who could best benefit from a stay in the U.S. This suggestion would possibly strengthen follow-up and improve program continuity.



The group agreed that though there is a wide range of information and material made available by ALA, a more specific resources checklist, authored by past fellows, should be developed. It was envisioned that this checklist/resource book would include useful tips picked up by experienced fellows, personal logistics (banking, child care, visas, etc.), articles on library development in the countries of assignment, local resource people (such as USIS and Fulbright staff and Library of Congress field directors), library corporate contacts (for possible demonstrations or donations), as well as references for general information. Another suggestion for this checklist is basic information about MARC. For example, the Follett publication *Understanding MARC*. Two fellows volunteered to start working on this project so that the next "class" of fellows will have this resource prior to their departure.

Re-Entry

"In some ways, you're never really back home; your heart will always be with the people and place you've left behind."

Reaction to returning to the U.S. varied. While one fellow noted that her re-entry was relatively smooth, another, who returned during the rioting in Los Angeles, found herself angry with a society which could produce such violence. At least two participants returned to find that housing arrangements made before they left had fallen through and, as a result, they were temporarily homeless.

Although they had been warned about re-entry shock, many were surprised at the length of the re-entry process. Several wished they had taken the advice they received to take time off after the fellowship was completed. They had not done so and as a result felt especially overwhelmed by their jobs and commitments made prior to their departures.

A frustration shared by many within the group was that news about the countries they had just left was difficult to get upon returning to the U.S. To many, it seemed that little of what occurs in the rest of the world is covered by the press here. It was suggested that subscribing to local newspapers/magazines from the host country may ease re-entry and will help fellows keep in touch.

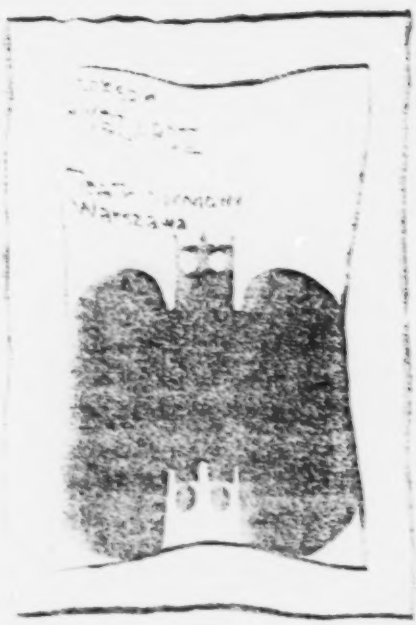
The group observed that since their needs are great, staff at the host institutions made many requests of fellows as their departure time approached. In particular, some fellows were asked about the possibility of organizing shipments of books to the host country. Everyone agreed that fellows should acknowledge their limitations in this area. Once fellows have departed, the necessary time and resources to assist host institutions are scarce. Fellows should take care not to make commitments impossible to keep. In general, the group felt that more mechanisms for follow-up were needed.

Continuing International Involvement

"I learned as much as I taught and I want to share that experience and knowledge."

Based on their activities since returning, the fellows are very committed to continuing their involvement in international library activities. Several had written papers and lectured at conferences and library schools about their experience. Publishing in particular was seen as an excellent means of both providing closure and sharing the experience with others. Association with others interested in international librarianship, such as that provided through international committees of ALA, SLA, and other professional organizations was also important.

All agreed that they'd like to host a visiting librarian from "their" country, and the benefits of a two-way exchange were discussed at length. These exchanges would build upon the work started by the fellows, particularly if librarians from the host institutions could be involved. The program's continuity thus would be significantly enhanced. It is envisioned that two-way exchanges will begin in 1993 and the fellows pledged to assist.



PROPOSAL SOLICITATION

"The proposal was written two years before I arrived, by someone whose priorities had changed. The staff at the host institution didn't seem to know what the proposal said. In fact, I don't know if they'd ever seen it."

While there has been no shortage of proposals, unevenness in their quality continues to be a problem. Many proposals contain unrealistic expectations of the amount and kind of work that can be done during the fellowship. It was suggested that former fellows and other librarians be called on by USIA to clarify, especially when additional technical expertise is required.

Communication within the host institution and between the host institution and USIS continues to be a problem not easily resolved. Since the proposal authors may or may not be working with the fellow, it is important that the key staff at the host institution see the final proposal. It should be sent to those staff in advance of the fellow's arrival.

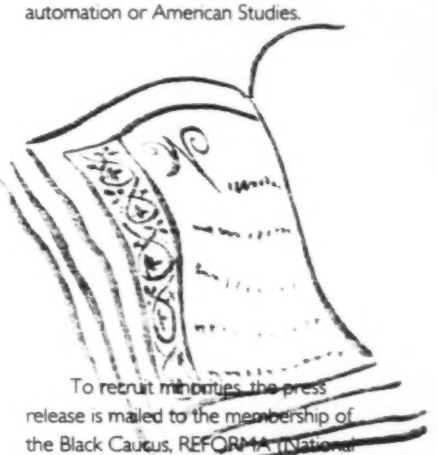
The role of the overseas-based USIS library officers in project solicitation continues to increase each year and these officers should be aware of what the host institution can and will provide, since the USIS library officers may be required to offer facilitative assistance when the host institution cannot. Confirmation of the project's major points, after the fellow is selected, is vital. This would be carried out through USIS officers dealing directly with host librarians, and through correspondence between fellow and host institution.

Overall, the group recognized that the proposal content and reality might not be a perfect fit. They reaffirmed the need for fellows to be flexible, observing that flexibility was a requirement for success.

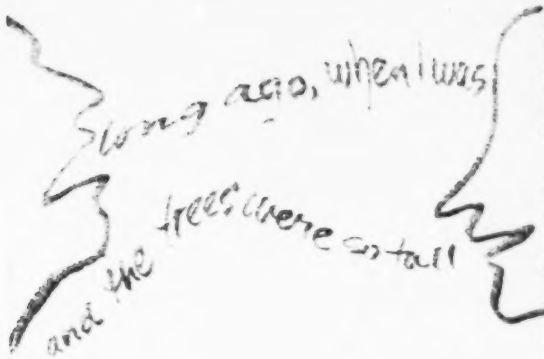
RECRUITMENT

"While administrators at my library approved my leave of absence, more needs to be done to publicize the program so that the administration will recognize its importance."

ALA's recruitment effort includes sending press releases to approximately 400 journals and newsletters, to members of the International Relations Round Table, the Association for Library and Information Science Education and the Association of Research Libraries. A paid advertisement is placed in *American Libraries* and the positions are posted at the Midwinter Job Placement Center. Letters with the press release attached are sent to Urban Libraries Council members, and the U.S. institutional members of IFLA. Positions are also advertised in more specialized journals to reach a narrower audience, for example, librarians with expertise in automation or American Studies.



To recruit minorities, the press release is mailed to the membership of the Black Caucus, REFORMA (National Association to Promote Library Services to the Spanish Speaking), Chinese-American Librarians Association, and American Indian Library Association. The press release is also mailed to all area studies associations, e.g., the Association for Asian Studies, Inc. Some of these associations have their own library subcommittees with their own newsletters, e.g., *Africana Libraries Newsletter*, and the positions have been announced in these newsletters also.



USIA staff noted that the quality of applicants has steadily improved over the last six years. This may be the result of better recognition of the program or improved recruiting methods. With the hiring of the first minority fellow in this year's group and two minority participants in the 1992-93 class, strong recruiting efforts are beginning to produce results.

While the group could make no additions to the list of publications and organizations used for recruitment, they discussed at length the need for more recognition of the program to enhance recruitment efforts. Currently, the final report is distributed to all 56,000 ALA members as a center insert in *American Libraries*. In addition it is sent to: individuals specified by each fellow, library colleagues, administration at the fellow's library, the host institutions, USIA offices, local newspapers and the fellow's representatives in Congress. To increase recognition and improve the status of the fellowship, participants suggested sending announcements about appointments immediately after they are made.

The program's tight schedule, cited in the past as a recruiting problem, was not mentioned as a major negative factor. In fact, a few of the participants appreciated the speed with which the process moved. It was also observed that one result of the longer lead time may be a higher program dropout rate. Some fellows have had to relinquish their fellowships when new professional or personal conflicts arose in the time between selection and departure.

Orientation

"The most interesting part was listening to former fellows speak. They were realistic and open about problems and that helped me prepare for my assignment."

Most of the fellows agreed that the pre-departure orientation session was very helpful. Reaction to the USIA desk officer portion varied. For some countries, the information imparted was critical and very useful; in other places, it was not as useful. The orientation process was viewed positively.

Debriefing

"This was great; something I needed to do to make my re-entry complete."

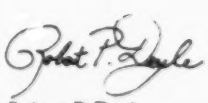
The debriefing session was highly valued by all participants. It offered them an excellent opportunity to articulate their thoughts and feelings about their experience and to reinforce ties with others who share their interest. Everyone agreed that the two-day session was conducive to candid, comfortable discussion and evaluation.

Though the debriefing session was recognized as a very valuable component of the program evaluation process, at times group members felt they were being too negative. They concluded that there would be no point in evaluation and debriefing without constructive criticism and hoped their comments will be helpful for future fellows. They re-emphasized that the fellowship experience had been very positive, something they would value personally and professionally for a long time to come.

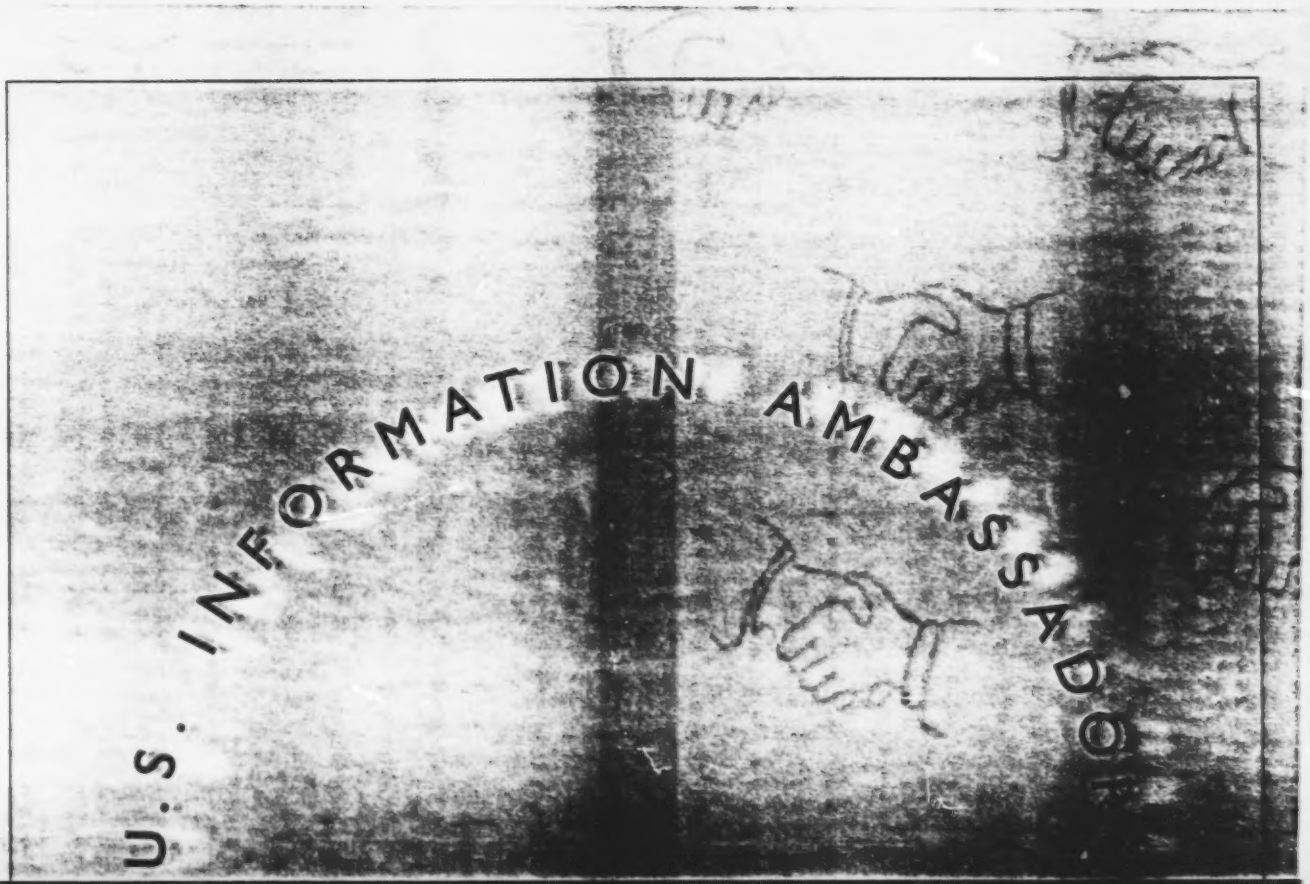
RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a summary of the fellows' major recommendations:

- 1) Establish stronger communication links between all parties involved in the project proposal process, with special emphasis on greater participation of USIS library officers in formulating project proposals. This has been recommended in past reports and is emphasized again because it is essential to resolving some recurring problems. The USIS library officers' involvement should start early in the process; beginning with the project's description and face-to-face discussion of the project with host institution staff who are assigned to work with the fellow. This involvement in planning the project could be a decisive factor in clarifying what kinds of expertise are needed, what kind of preparation is essential for both institution and fellow, and how much one person can reasonably be expected to do in a limited time period.
- 2) Continue to advise fellows to negotiate a specific agenda for their work after their arrival, keeping in mind that it must be done with great sensitivity to the status, priorities, and work habits of host institution staff. As another means of easing the disparity between proposal description and reality, it is recommended that USIA develop a generic checklist to be sent to the host institution, to be completed and returned to USIS prior to the fellow's arrival. The checklist would include very specific items (e.g., level of existing automation, what hardware and software exist and how accessible it is, what classification system is used, etc). The purpose of the checklist would be to give fellows as much specific, working information as possible prior to their arrival.
- 3) Develop guidelines for the fellows' final report for consistency and to assure that the report contains all necessary information.
- 4) Consider changing the name of the program to one which will offer more immediate and lasting international recognition.
- 5) Add a section to the evaluation form to include suggestions for possible follow-up projects.
- 6) Develop a checklist/resource book, tailored to the needs of Library Fellow Program participants, and authored by the fellows.
- 7) Evaluate the orientation session at the conclusion of session.
- 8) Continue to emphasize that the re-entry period may be surprisingly difficult and stress the need to take time off before returning to work. Asking a reliable friend or relative to handle all on-going personal business so that there will be no major problems awaiting the fellow's return will also facilitate re-entry.
- 9) Encourage fellows' to write and lecture about their experience and to become involved with professional organizations interested in international librarianship. Published reports about the Library Fellows Program, written by program participants, increase program recognition and visibility, may be helpful recruitment and educational tools and provide needed information to librarians interested in international libranianship.
- 10) Use fellows' knowledge and enthusiasm in implementing the two-way exchanges. This program expansion will add continuity and produce more lasting improvements at the indigenous institution.



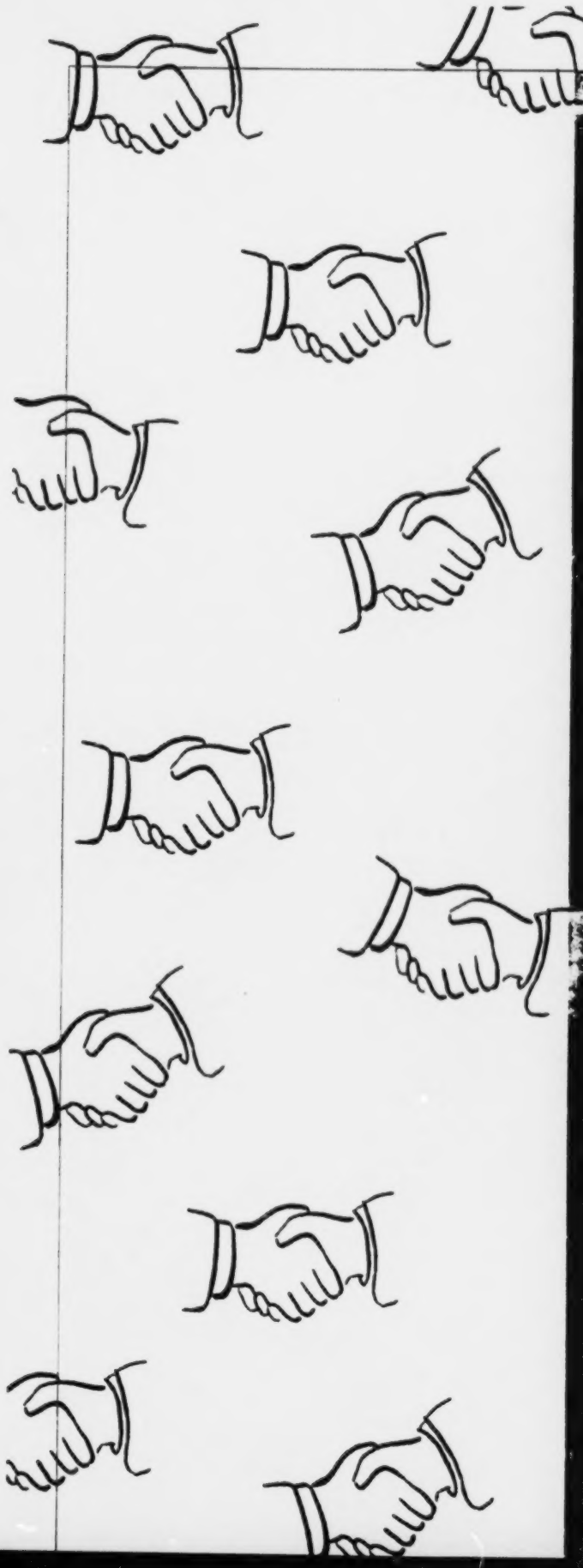
Robert P. Doyle.
U.S. Information Ambassadors: 1991-92 Library Fellows Debriefing Report
(Chicago: American Library Association, 1993).



THE 1991-92 LIBRARY FELLOWS

120541524

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



"In a world divided by ideology, by trade barriers, by military threats and nuclear fears, we librarians are not powerless. We are the ambassadors of an indivisible world—of culture and books and ideas. Unfortunately, we are not plenipotentiary. But there is no country in the world where librarians cannot make some small progress toward removing the boundaries and lowering the barriers which separate cultures and which are sponsored by citizens or by governments. Every librarian, regardless of his government's policy, has the opportunity, if he has the courage, to open the avenues of books and ideas a little wider. . . . We must try to make the world of books more open—so that men and women everywhere may breathe freely the uncensored open air of ideas."

Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Indivisible World: Libraries and the Myth of Cultural Exchange* (Washington, D.C.: The Library of Congress, 1985).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PURPOSE

The Library Fellows Program, which began in 1986, is funded with a grant to the American Library Association from the United States Information Agency (USIA) under the authority of the Fulbright-Hays Act. The program's purpose is threefold: (1) to increase international understanding through the establishment of professional and personal relationships and the accomplishment of mutual goals; (2) to enhance international sharing of resources and to improve access to U.S. materials in the host country; and (3) to enable U.S. librarians to enrich their careers with their unique experiences through living and working overseas.

Fellows are chosen on the basis of ability to share their expertise with librarians from other countries and to learn from their overseas colleagues' experiences. When the Fellows return home, they bring increased awareness and understanding, and they share that understanding with their U.S. colleagues.

THE PARTICIPANTS

The fifth (1991-92) class of eleven Fellows was chosen from hundreds of applicants in a demanding process seeking U.S. library professionals to initiate and carry out projects in other nations. Their assignments lasted from three to fourteen months in such diverse posts as Bolivia, Russia, Poland, Peru, Israel, Iceland, Romania, Egypt, Yugoslavia and India. The Fellows' projects, developed in cooperation with host country institutions and USIA, were wide-ranging and included teaching cataloging and classification, training library school students and faculty in automated information retrieval, consulting on reference services, and presenting workshops and seminars on storytelling.

Each Fellow's experience was unique and posed exciting and unusual challenges as well as unforeseen obstacles. But all of the Fellows gained new perspectives in the process of sharing materials, ideas, and information with their overseas colleagues.

The following profiles highlight the experiences of the 1991-92 Fellows. For information on the Library Fellows positions available for 1993-94, please see *American Libraries*, February 1993.

La Paz, Bolivia, is located at the highest altitude of any of the world's capital cities in the barren Andrean plateau known as the "altiplano." The city center and its tallest buildings lie at the bottom of a huge craterlike depression in the landscape, and neighborhoods of small adobe houses march up the surrounding hillsides. Towering over all is the snowcapped mountain, Illimani. Library Fellow Maria-Solange Macias called La Paz—her home for the first six months of 1992—"a truly spectacular city." "At night it takes on the magical appearance of a bowl of shining jewels."

The striking contrasts in the landscape of La Paz are echoed in its culture. Modern American movies coexist with native forms of expression dating to preColumbian times. The indigenous population still speaks the ancient language and the women wear the traditional ruffled skirt, embroidered shawl, and bowler hat. "There is a sense of not one, but several different societies existing side-by-side and interacting only superficially," Macias observed after a month in the colorful city.

Macias' assignment took her to the headquarters of the Banco del Libro (BdL), or "Book Bank," in La Paz, which was established in 1970 by the Ministry of Education to serve as a combined school/public library. Under the leadership of its director, Mr. Nelson Larrea, the Banco del Libro grew over the next 20 years into a nationwide system of 190 branches ("filiales") and became the de facto school library network.

The BdL accomplished this feat virtually without a book budget. Because the Ministry of Education funds only salaries and some capital expenses for the BdL's, most books are donated. Many filiales have but a few shelves of worn books; magazine and newspaper subscriptions are a rare luxury.

Macias's goal as a Library Fellow was to help BdL staff members throughout the country maximize use of the scarce resources. "I wanted to promote a more efficient and imaginative handling of the materials available, and to emphasize that most school and public libraries in Bolivia could improve their services and contribute to the progress of their communities without resorting to expensive technology." To achieve this goal, she designed a series of three-day, in-service workshops for BdL staff in La Paz and in the principal cities of Cochabamba and Santa Cruz.

MARIA-SOLANGE MACIAS

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Maria-Solange Macias, a collections development librarian at Miami Dade (Florida) Public Library System went to Banco del Libro, La Paz, Bolivia. Her fellowship lasted from January through June 1992.

In preparation for the workshops, Macias toured the filiales located in low-income neighborhoods of La Paz. She observed that many BdL staff members had a remarkable amount of enthusiasm for their work despite the lack of resources. On her itinerary was the newest BdL—La Biblioteca Infantil y Juvenil 'Oscar Alfaro'—named for the poet who pioneered children's literature in Bolivia. Opened in 1991, the library is housed in a colorful and attractive building and has an imaginatively designed play area, open stacks and a young committed staff. "It has great untapped potential as a truly pedagogical institution—one that can offer training for teachers and serve as a role model for other Bolivian libraries." The Library Fellow offered to consult there while she prepared her workshop lectures and translated her research materials into Spanish.

Work came to a halt during the ten-day-long Carnival celebrations in La Paz. Carnival is the culmination of many popular festivals which mark the beginning of the year in Bolivia. At the "Alacitas" fair people buy miniature houses, cars, money, and farm animals and have them blessed by both a native shaman and a priest for good luck. Elaborately costumed dancers in fabulous monster masks highlight carnival parades in the mining town of Oruro. In addition to these folkloric displays, Macias also attended a traditional peasant festival in Copacabana on the shores of Lake Titicaca.

In spite of these celebrations, economic and social problems were difficult to ignore. The Library Fellow's planned trips to visit Book Banks in the countryside were cancelled for lack of resources. Throughout March and April, strikes and demonstrations frequently closed many institutions in La Paz, including the University. Nevertheless, Macias initiated informal discussions with the University's Library Science faculty on the need for curriculum reforms; they continued to make progress on the reforms throughout her stay. To further offset delays in La Paz, an additional consulting assignment took Macias to the new technology information center of the Universidad Andina in Sucre.

By comparison, the last months of her fellowship were spent in a flurry of activity that began with the BdL sponsored workshops in Cochabamba and Santa Cruz. Macias's lectures focused on modernizing and improving library public services, with emphasis on reference techniques, library instruction, community and collection analysis, and outreach programs in response to community needs. In both cities, workshop participants included librarians from schools, universities, government offices, private industry and non-profit research institutions. "At times it became quite a challenge with such a heterogenous crowd to present the material so that everyone could get something useful out of it." On the plus side, the Library Fellow noted, this diversity meant that "the message" got out to the greatest possible number of library practitioners.

The workshop interaction also helped promote networking and greater cooperation among librarians at different institutions. Local library associations were reactivated with a renewed sense of purpose after each workshop. At the final workshop in La Paz, BdL staff were in the majority, but also in the audience were "very motivated young students" from the University Library Science department. Afterwards, Macias joined them at a local restaurant for a lively closing celebration.

During the course of her fellowship, Macias had been able to talk with librarians and observe conditions throughout the country. As a result she became convinced of the need to persuade policy makers at the Ministry of Education of the importance of libraries in educational development efforts. Determined to present the case for better public and school libraries, Macias conferred with top-level education administrators in La Paz. Their discussions resulted in a week-long conference on the role and importance of libraries in the educational system— the first in-depth conference ever held on the subject of school libraries in Bolivia.

Over eighty Ministry of Education staff members involved in national education planning and curriculum development took part in the conference along with librarians, principals and teachers. The participants developed recommendations for greater integration of libraries in the educational process, including training in library methods at the national teacher training colleges ("escuelas normales"), and called for increased funding to upgrade library staffs, facilities and collections. These recommendations were to be presented to the Minister of Education for inclusion in an upcoming National Congress on educational reform.

"Designing and conducting this seminar was the most challenging and rewarding experience of my fellowship," Macias declared. Most participants had little knowledge of librarianship or the concept of a school media center that supports instruction, and they were skeptical about using the library for multipurpose activities. "It was exceptionally gratifying to see the transformation that my audience underwent. I can only hope the insights they gained will be reflected in future policy decisions."

Macias's experience in Bolivia was a fulfilling and positive one: "Never in my professional life have I felt so needed and my expertise so valued." But she expressed concern that many worthwhile projects she had begun might end for lack of adequate resources to continue them. "I suspect this may be a common frustration for Fellows who serve in the developing world. It would be interesting to discuss strategies for following up on projects."

JITKA HURYCH

After witnessing the "putsch" that took place in the former Soviet Union in August 1991 while she was attending the conference of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), Library Fellow Jitka Hurych had mixed feelings as she headed for Moscow once again in April of 1992. There, during a three-month fellowship at the All-State Library of Foreign Literature in the capital of the new Russian Republic, she saw for herself what life has been like in Moscow and other cities since the attempted coup. "The present situation is also terribly complicated and difficult to understand," she concluded.

Faced with extreme social and economic upheaval, the library community in Russia nonetheless remains dedicated to maintaining collections and services. Hurych was impressed with their devotion: "Most Russian libraries have absolutely no funds for buying new books and serials at present. I have great respect for what they manage to do with very little."

A warm reception from Ekaterina Genieva, director of the All-State Library of Foreign Literature, awaited the Library Fellow. Under Mrs. Genieva's leadership, the Library is becoming a cultural center not only for Moscow, but for all of Russia. With holdings of some five million items in 136 languages, it is a magnet for Russians and for citizens of other countries living in Moscow.

An American reading room—the first collection of American books in a Russian library open to the public—was inaugurated in the All-State Library two years ago. Exhibits, conferences, literary and musical evenings, and official meetings involving representatives of foreign cultures increase the Library's visibility in the country. "Although the economic situation is extremely hard and the pay is very low, most librarians are enthusiastic about the Library and their work. From the beginning I felt welcome and very soon I was accepted as a member of the team."

Jitka Hurych, head of the Science and Engineering Libraries at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, went to the All-State Library of Foreign Literature, Moscow. Her fellowship lasted from April through June 1992.

Library Fellow Hurych's primary assignment was to present seminars about American reference services to librarians from the All-State Library and other major libraries of Moscow, among them the Lenin Library and the library of Moscow State University. Evaluating the All-State Library's collection of American resources and advising on improvements to its collections and reference services were other goals. "I evaluated the Library's collection of American literature and found it outstanding. The collections have been built over the years by subject specialists par excellence—people with advanced degrees in literature, linguistics, history and other fields."

Work on enhancing collections and reference resources at the All-State Library had begun long before the Library Fellow left for Moscow. At Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Ill., where Hurych is head of the Science and Engineering Department of the University Libraries, she collected books for the Library from faculty members in history, political science, linguistics, education, and teaching English as a second language. She also compiled bibliographic guides to the "best books" in American history, political science, and literature for the head of collection development at the All-State Library, as well as lists of recommended reference sources and books in library and information science.

Hurych's home for her three-month fellowship was a monumental Stalinist era building with a beautiful view of the Kremlin and the Moscow River — a mere five-minute walk from the Library and fifteen minutes from Red Square.

"Moscow is as interesting as ever," the Library Fellow wrote soon after her arrival. There were concerts, ballets, plays, and operas to see, and cathedrals, monasteries, and literary and art museums to visit. "The city is still a cultural place although the living conditions are extremely difficult for the people." She had the good fortune to witness the most revered of the country's holy rituals—the dramatic Russian Orthodox Easter ceremonies that take place in the venerable old cathedrals of the capital.

During a month of familiarizing herself with the various departments of the All-State Library of Foreign Literature, Hurych found that the Library's users were primarily interested in books on management, business, finance, and business law. "There is also a great deal of interest in foreign language study and teaching methodology as well as in contemporary literature."

The Library Fellow did some "hands-on" reference work in the American reading room, answering questions related to American culture and the English language. G. A. Kislovskaja, assistant deputy director of the Library, praised Hurych's contribution to the work of the reading room: "Mrs. Hurych brought with her American ideas on what public service is and how it should be perfected. Because of her assistance, the American Reading Hall has received an authentic American touch."

Librarians from several Moscow libraries besides the All-State Library attended Hurych's seminars on American library practices. Lectures covered the structure and organization of American university libraries; reference services and ethics, the reference interview, and online services; and collection management and resource sharing. Response from attendees was good, she reported. "My Russian colleagues were very interested in these topics and there were quite a few questions after each session."

Moscow is home to many impressive libraries. Visiting them gave the Library Fellow an excellent overview of Russian library practices and the opportunity to widely share her own expertise, especially in online databases and networking. At the Russian State Library, one of the world's largest libraries and Russia's major depository, she visited the renowned Museum of the Book. Invited to the grand opening of a comprehensive health sciences database of Russian publications at the State Central Research Medical Library, Hurych discovered a system comparable to and compatible with Medline.

A choir sang as a Russian Orthodox priest sprinkled holy water throughout the Nekrasov Central City Public Library during the Library Fellow's visit. The blessing was to protect the nineteenth-century mansion housing the library from demolition at the hands of Russian and foreign entrepreneurs who seek to build a hotel, restaurant, or stadium on the spot. "It was a rather touching spiritual event," Hurych wrote. "The priest promised the church's help in preserving the library." Most of the libraries Hurych visited expressed interest in establishing programs of book exchange with American academic libraries.

Siberia and other regions of the country were on the Library Fellow's itinerary near the end of her stay. In Novosibirsk, Siberia, she lectured on American academic libraries and discovered that the Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences is interested in librarian exchanges with the U.S. At the Saltykov-Shchedrin Public Library in St. Petersburg, a woman who had worked in the library during the siege of Leningrad led Hurych through a collection of rare manuscripts and books from the era of Peter the Great. "Her story and knowledge of the Library were fascinating." The Library Fellow also lectured on online catalogs and electronic databases at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in Kiev.

After a very successful fellowship—of which U.S. Embassy personnel in Moscow said, "It would be difficult to do better"—Library Fellow Hurych was invited to return to Russia to train librarians for the American cultural center that is being developed. "I hope that I will have an opportunity to go back some day and see what changes have taken place," she said. "As I was leaving, I knew I would miss Moscow, my host library, and new friends. It has been an extremely rewarding experience for me."

During Library Fellow Marjorie Rosenthal's six-month fellowship at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel suffered its coldest winter in one hundred years. Four times between December and March, snow piled up in the Jerusalem hills, while the rest of the country was inundated with heavy rain accompanied by strong winds. Trees planted at the time of the country's birth forty-four years ago toppled and illness was widespread, in part due to the lack of central heating. Fortunately, Rosenthal and her husband managed to stay warm and healthy—"in a cozy little apartment with our own thermostat."

The Library Fellow's assignment was to teach at the Graduate School of Library and Archive Studies of the Hebrew University. In a joint fellowship proposal, the Hebrew University and Israel's Ministry of Education and Culture had asked for a Fellow to teach for one semester at the University and one semester at Kaye Teachers' College in Beer Sheva. However, two equally qualified candidates applied for the position—Rosenthal and Barbara Rush (see profile on pages 22-23). So for the first time in the history of the Library Fellows Program, a fellowship was divided between two outstanding candidates, with the approval of the sponsoring institutions.

School libraries in Israel have been targeted for long overdue improvement by the Ministry of Education and Culture. "The education of librarians, teacher-librarians, and paraprofessional library staff for schools is of paramount importance in the plan, as is in-service training for practicing library personnel. Most school librarians, at least in large cities, have a two-year teacher's college background; others in towns, villages, and settlements may take a course offered by teacher's colleges," Rosenthal observed.

At the Hebrew University library school—the only one in the country to offer the MLS—Rosenthal taught two courses: management of school libraries and reading encouragement for children. Now an assistant professor at the Palmer School of Library and Information Science, Long Island University, she teaches courses on school libraries, children's literature, and instructional methods. With twenty years of experience in school libraries and public library children's services, Rosenthal had the expertise needed to make school libraries an important part of the library school curriculum.

MARJORIE ROSENTHAL

Library school students at Hebrew University are required to complete a rigorous academic schedule, including a thesis reviewed by a committee. "The Master's degree in Library Science in Israel could be categorized as somewhere between the Master's and the doctorate in the U.S." Soon after the first day of classes, Rosenthal reported that she had received a warm welcome from students and other faculty members. "I had everything I needed at my disposal and was almost immediately appointed a 'visiting scholar,' a real honor."

Among the most popular of the many books and other instructional materials the Library Fellow brought from the U.S. were ALA "Read" posters. She received many requests for them throughout her six months in Jerusalem, with "Miss Piggy" and "The Simpsons" posters in the highest demand.

Visits to school libraries were an important part of Rosenthal's weekly itinerary. "To become familiar with the education system and its results, one must visit schools, and I did—23 of them—elementary, secondary, Jewish, Arab, Druse . . . from the upper Galilee and Mount Carmel in the north to Beer Tuvia in the south and both East and West Jerusalem." Everywhere, people asked for her opinion on changing and improving libraries. "Occasionally, a library or librarian was doing such outstanding work that very little could be suggested except that salaries and working conditions be upgraded."

libraries. To better acquaint the group and librarians serving young people with techniques for drawing children to books, the Library Fellow offered to inaugurate a series of workshops on promoting children's reading and encouraging public library cooperation with teachers and school librarians. Mr. Avraham Vilner, director of Jerusalem Public Libraries, helped coordinate the first workshop and sent invitations to all the elementary school and children's librarians in Jerusalem. Nearly 40 people attended—most of them from the schools. At the very successful program, Rosenthal discussed techniques for booktalks, while Library Fellow Barbara Rush demonstrated storytelling methods.

Encouraging reading was also an objective of the English Teachers Association of Jerusalem. After the group's president contacted Rosenthal, she spoke to them about promoting reading and involving their school librarians in the English curriculum. The result was that JELLY and the English Teachers Association agreed to cooperate on projects to enhance the teaching and enjoyment of English. "I felt that by the end of my stay, the understanding of the school library mission in Israel was well on the way to real development," Rosenthal remarked.

The annual Israel Library Conference sponsored a session on school libraries for the first time in several years while Rosenthal was in the country. She and several Israeli colleagues prepared a program on school librarian-

Marjorie Rosenthal, assistant professor at Palmer School of Library and Information Science, Long Island University, traveled to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. Her fellowship lasted from October 1991 through March 1992.

Becoming acquainted with Jerusalem and its environs was a delight for Rosenthal and her husband. "The city is as intense, exciting, and unique a place to explore as any in the world." They sampled various cuisines, from traditional Eastern European Jewish cooking to Arab specialties, and Rosenthal commented, "The fruits, vegetables, and dairy products are the best I have ever tasted!"

A day trip to the Egyptian Sinai found them at the renowned Monastery of Santa Katerina, located near the foot of the Biblical Mt. Sinai, where Moses received the Ten Commandments. Traveling in the desert was an "otherworldly" experience: "With the exception of a few Bedouins, it was empty and almost totally desolate." The library of the monastery—one of the most famous in the world—was for centuries the home of the Codex Syriacus, the first written version of the Bible, until it disappeared during the nineteenth century (it is now in the British Museum). The dry, cool desert climate provides a superb environment for the preservation of ancient documents.

In addition to her teaching at the Hebrew University, Rosenthal was involved in several projects that concerned both teacher-librarian networking and integrating the library into the school curriculum. An organization called JELLY (Jerusalem English Language Library for Youth) provides children's books in English for Jerusalem's public

teacher cooperation and library integration into the curriculum for the meeting in Tel Aviv. To their astonishment, the fourth snowstorm of the season closed the roads from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv on the first day of the conference. "Still, there were about 250 attendees and well over 150 of them came to hear us. We were overjoyed, as this obviously indicated more interest in and recognition of the school library role than had ever been shown previously. . . . It was the icing on the cake."

"I cannot find the words to describe what this experience has meant to me," Rosenthal later said of her fellowship. "Living and working in (and having your contributions valued) by another culture's library community is a privilege not afforded many librarians. I treasure the friends I have made and the knowledge and understanding I have gained!"

Dr. Bluma Peritz, director of the Hebrew University School of Library and Archive Studies, spoke of Rosenthal's valuable contributions to the school and other educational institutions throughout Israel. In a letter to the Library Fellow, she wrote, "Your courses, workshops, lectures, and other work have contributed tremendously to the better understanding of the importance of school libraries and reading promotion . . . . I would like to wish that you will continue this wonderful work for many, many years to come."

Library Fellow Ann Montgomery Smith had many things on her mind as she flew toward Lima, Peru, for a six-month fellowship with the newly formed Colegio de Bibliotecologos del Peru, the first professional organization of librarians in the country. She wondered about the scope of her activities with the Colegio, and whether she would be affected by the cholera outbreak, though she had been vaccinated. The political situation was also problematical—terrorist activity in Peru continued in spite of a government-declared state of emergency.

"It came as a surprise to me, then, as my plane swept in low over the outskirts of Lima during the last minutes of daylight, that the theme song from 'Raiders of the Lost Ark' was running through my mind. How could I be anything but upbeat when adventure was at hand?" Concerns about terrorism were allayed by U.S. Embassy personnel soon after her arrival in Peru, but Smith found that the tense political climate did affect her planned fellowship activities in Lima and to some extent curtailed travel outside the capital.

The vision for the Colegio de Bibliotecologos del Peru is that it will emerge as the primary national policymaking body for library services in the country. Among its more than 200 members are the directors of every major state and private library in Peru, including major research and information centers in Lima.

With help from the library schools at the Catholic University and the University of San Marcos in Lima—the only library schools in the country—the Colegio is formulating a long-term strategy for improving library training and services in Peru. The plan was for Library Fellow Smith to teach a course at both library schools, conduct in-service workshops in some of the outlying cities, and help the Colegio develop a methodology for training librarians.

ANN MONTGOMERY SMITH

During her first month in Lima, Smith visited 15 libraries—ranging from one-person public libraries to the National Library—and met more than 35 librarians. "Exciting and dynamic solutions are being tried all over the country," she noted, "but other librarians don't know about them. Advocating for these solutions was an important part of my activities."

Encouraging communication among librarians became a sub-theme of Smith's fellowship. She helped the Colegio del Bibliotecologos develop a newsletter and encouraged members to form special interest chapters. And as she continued to visit libraries and talk to librarians throughout her stay, the Library Fellow made suggestions and transmitted information from one library to another. "At first I was like a sponge absorbing the reality of Peruvian library activity, but I quickly began to feel like a bee that picked up and dropped off bits of pollen as it buzzed from flower to flower....I was providing cross-pollination among their libraries perhaps more than I was actually bringing in ideas from outside."

The University of San Marcos was considered off-limits in the volatile political situation, so Smith was not able to teach her own course there. However, she arranged with several San Marcos library science faculty members to help off-campus with their classes in preservation and conservation, collection development, and the tranlation of library literature.

At the Catholic University, the Library Fellow was asked to teach an 18-week course in the administration and organization of academic, special and national libraries. She carefully scripted all of her lectures in Spanish for the seven advanced level students. "Organizing 18 weeks of material using local resources was at least as complex as I had expected." These scripts became the basis for a later six-session mini-course for practicing librarians and members of the Colegio. Students in the mini-course expressed appreciation for her command of the language and understanding of the working reality of Peruvian libraries.

Although travel outside Lima was restricted, the Library Fellow visited libraries in Cuzco and Trujillo and saw several sights for which Peru is well known. "I was able to experience environments of extreme beauty and historic significance—to visit a new archaeological site with its discoverer, climb up to the secret city of Machu Picchu, and stand in awe at the towering peaks of the white and black mountain ranges near Huaraz."

In Lima, friends took her to clubs where immigrants from outlying towns gather together to eat the foods of their region and dance to traditional music. "They cook in earthen ovens in which special rocks are heated. When the oven is appropriately hot, they bake bean pods, potatoes, meat and cornmeal mush wrapped in corn husks. Delicious!"

A unique library-oriented program to prevent drug abuse among young people came to Smith's attention after a chance meeting with the British Cultural Affairs Officer in the capital. In the program, called CEDRO, youngsters are encouraged to develop and manage small community libraries. The goal is to provide them with responsibility, help them to better use their time outside of school, and give them a sense of accomplishment and community involvement that will steer them away from drugs.

"On several Saturday afternoons I met with as many as sixty of these eager library volunteers to talk about displaying books, shelving and organizing materials, preventing damage (by people, insects, and climate), and making minor repairs." The student-run libraries were often located in a corner of a community center or in someone's house, but they included the best collections of children's books that the Library Fellow had seen any where in the city—"Even in the municipal libraries of Lima's better suburbs, where the children's room was sometimes permanently appropriated by municipal officials for other functions, such as civil marriage!"

In her consultations with the Colegio de Bibliotecologos, Library Fellow Smith worked closely with the Colegio's first President, Martha Fernandez de Lopez. At the time, Lopez was serving on special assignment as deputy director of the National Library of Peru (Biblioteca Nacional del Peru), which is in the process of a major reorganization. Among the Library's treasures are a 15th-century Spanish volume containing handwritten notations by Garcilaso de la Vega, who wrote the first history of the Inca Empire—"a state that was destroyed before it had been known."

Plans for reorganizing the National Library had been waiting for the signature of the Minister of Education when Peruvian President Fujimori announced a state of emergency. In the meantime, the Library continued to investigate ways of increasing its effectiveness and productivity, especially in the areas of bibliographic control and access to information. The Library does not use a standard cataloging format at present, although the MARC format is used for the National Bibliography. Therefore, Smith explained the use of MARC records in resource sharing, demonstrated Library of Congress MARC cataloging, and helped identify projects for a Fulbright scholar cataloging specialist who was scheduled to arrive in early 1993.

"This assignment was probably the most challenging and satisfying project that I have ever undertaken," the Library Fellow said in her final report. "The multiple activities in which I participated ensured a high level of personal satisfaction and discouraged any focus on frustrations or problems. The people I met were genuine, friendly and helpful." She expressed pleasure in knowing that her visit was part of a continuum in which Fulbright scholars would build on her activities in libraries and computer networking. "I'm working on cooperative efforts with libraries here and at home that I hope will continue for years to come and am very sorry to leave. It's been a fantastic experience."

Ann Montgomery Smith is director of Libraries and Curator of Special Collections at Wentworth Institute, Boston. Her fellowship at the Colegio de Bibliotecologos del Peru, Lima lasted from February through July 1992.

JAMES MOLDOVAN

One of the highlights of Library Fellow James Moldovan's six-month assignment at the Central University Library of Bucharest was the inauguration of Romania's first library network—only two years after disaster struck the Library in the country's "Christmas Revolution" of 1989. During the uprising against the Ceaucescu regime, the Library's stately old main building near the city center became the focal point of fiery battles between opposing forces. A priceless collection of incunabula and manuscripts was destroyed along with many other books and periodicals. However, some 1.6 million volumes housed in other locations escaped the conflagration.

During his fellowship, Moldovan was reminded of the great loss whenever he passed the shell of the building. "The Library is being rebuilt slowly—but its charred skeleton continues to stand as a symbol of 46 years of intellectual isolation." The Library Fellow was in Romania to help develop a network and online catalog at the Central University Library. Now librarian at the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco, Moldovan has cataloged Romanian materials at the Library of Congress and has extensive experience with conversion from manual to online systems. Of Romanian descent, he had lived in the country before and is fluent in the language.

Nearly five decades of dictatorship isolated Romanian libraries from advances in librarianship and resulted in seriously out-of-date collections, especially in fields such as science and technology. To remedy the situation, many organizations are directing resources to the country's libraries. Projects such as ALA's "Books for Romania" have helped numerous university and technical college libraries begin to modernize their collections.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

James Moldovan, a librarian at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, San Francisco traveled to Central University Library, Bucharest, Romania. His stay lasted from January through June 1992.

Under the leadership of its director, Dr. Ion Stoica, the Central University Library has taken the lead in bringing Romanian libraries into the mainstream of Western librarianship. "With energy and finesse, he secured temporary quarters and began to rebuild the physical plant and collections," Moldovan reported. Unesco has designated the library as a pilot site for automation. At the time of the Library Fellow's arrival in Bucharest in January 1992, hardware and CD-ISIS software for an online catalog were on order and plans for a cataloging network were complete.

Moldovan's assignments were to prepare cataloging staff for automation through one-on-one instruction as well as classes and workshops, to consult with automation department staff about the online catalog and other automation possibilities, and to discuss library computerization with students in the recently re-established Department of Library Science.

Answering cataloging questions and helping staff become accustomed to the idea of automation took up much of the first two months of Moldovan's fellowship. "I am spending time with each cataloger at 'the terminal' so that each of them grows more comfortable working online. At this point, catalogers are standing in line, waiting to enter their records." By the end of January, the much awaited PCs for the network had arrived and on March 1, "The installation was completed and the first library network in Romania was a reality."

Catalogers had been contributing records to the database through the single terminal available, but with multiple PCs at hand their output increased considerably. By the end of March, the new network could boast of more than 20,000 records created locally by the staff of 25 catalogers. "Our move into automation is going ahead, albeit with some handicaps, of which we are aware," Moldovan commented at the time. "The Central University Library of Bucharest has been very receptive—it is a real pleasure for me to be here."

The Library Fellow was particularly interested in persuading catalogers to create access points with library users in mind. "Catalogers are growing in their understanding of users' needs in describing/classifying books within the framework of automation," he observed. "I talk a great deal to colleagues about users' needs and online access; I also speak about the usefulness of library utilities in facilitating user needs and access." A brief and easy-to-read introduction to library resource-sharing and OCLC written by Moldovan was published in a leading Romanian library journal.

In early April, the Library Fellow traveled to Moscow for the East-West Conference on Emerging Computer Technologies in Education. Asked to represent the Central University Library in Dr. Stoica's place, he termed the invitation "a great honor." At the conference, Mrs. Doina Banciu, head of the Library's Automation Department, presented a paper on computer applications in library education that was edited and translated by Moldovan. "Mrs. Banciu and I also visited several libraries in Moscow and paid particular attention to technical developments in each of them."

Upon his return to Bucharest, the Library Fellow continued to offer advice and instruction to catalogers about online cataloging and the CD-ISIS software. At the same time, he investigated the possibilities of a national library automation plan for Romania.

Responsibility for the Romanian national bibliography is shared among the Central University Library (for doctoral dissertations), the National Library (for current publications) and the Academy Library (for retrospective publications to 1918). Before a national automation plan could even be considered, however, basic documentation in Romanian was needed. Therefore, the Library Fellow persuaded the heads of automation at the Central University Library and the National Library to translate the 1987 edition of the UNIMARC manual into Romanian and to develop both a Romanian-English index for the manual and an appendix of Romanian cataloging examples.

He met weekly with the translators and also contacted the Library of Congress and the Deutsche Bibliothek to resolve any copyright and publication issues. "My colleagues are very capable and enthusiastic about this project. Correctly done, it will result in a fundamental library resource, promote collegiality among libraries here, and should move the Romanian national bibliography in line with current international standards....The future of machine-readable cataloging in Romania pivots around this project." By the time he left Romania, plans had been made to publish the manual in 1993.

A trip by car to the Transylvanian city of Cluj in May presented Moldovan with a rare opportunity to view several exquisite ninth-century manuscripts. The renowned Batthyaneum Library in the town of Alba Iulia, between Bucharest and Cluj, has a collection of some 600 incunabulae, including nearly half the original pages of the Codex Aureus/ Lorsch Gospels (c. 810).

In Cluj, he presented a paper on cooperative cataloging and library automation to staff at the University of Cluj Library and conducted a brief cataloging workshop. After the session, as the Library Fellow was discussing online cataloging procedures with an elderly cataloger, she suddenly exclaimed, "This isn't so difficult after all!" He promptly asked her to repeat the remark loudly for the benefit of the entire group and later reported, "Cluj was a success!"

Assessing the impact of his fellowship, Moldovan expressed a sense of satisfaction with the "tangible results" in automated cataloging. "I leave an institution which is considerably more integrated into the international library community than it was before my visit....The Library has much greater access to needed foreign contacts—with these contacts, it can move forward." Library Director Stoica commended the progress made at the Central University Library during Moldovan's time there. "He was a real help in working towards automation. His help and competence benefited both the department and each librarian in it."

As Alaskan librarian Sue Sherif arrived in Reykjavik, Iceland in the early morning darkness of New Year's Day 1992, she was aware of many lights. Some of them were familiar—the arctic sky was dotted with fireworks in celebration of the holiday. "I felt right at home because we have our fireworks on New Year's Eve in Alaska, too." But on the snowy bus trip into the capital city, she spotted something she had never seen—a cemetery in which every stone, marker and fence was festively adorned with bright Christmas lights. "This was my first clue that I was no longer in interior Alaska."

Library Fellow Sherif had come to Reykjavik for six months to teach undergraduate library courses at the University of Iceland and to give workshops on library services for children and young adults. She was also to plan a display of children's books to broaden Icelanders' knowledge of American children's literature and promote more translations into Icelandic.

As supervisor of youth, reference, and regional services for the North Star Borough Public Library in Fairbanks, Alaska, Sherif has wide experience in children's services. At the University of Alaska Fairbanks, she teaches courses on literature for children and on bringing books and children together.

Eager to learn the national language, Sherif began a class in Icelandic, but conceded, "Everyone speaks fantastic English so there's minimal incentive to try out my halting phrases." She marvelled at the remarkable tradition of literacy in this country of only 250,000 people. From their custom of family reading hours on long, dark winter evenings "to the national pride in the great sagas written in Icelandic," Icelanders have a reverence for the printed word. All libraries have a large number of foreign language works, particularly in English, but English materials are scarce for ages 12 and under.

SUE SHERIF

In preparing for her courses, Sherif found that censorship and selection of materials did not require the major emphasis they demand in the U.S. Iceland's publishing industry produces a small number of children's titles each year. Most libraries purchase multiple copies of every title on standing order, so selection is not an issue. The Library Fellow's inquiries about censorship revealed only three objections to books for children in the past ten years—none of them resulting in action. "The idea of removing books from library shelves seems to be a foreign one here."

Sherif quickly learned that Icelandic school and public librarians have a keen interest in young adult services. Her course on library services to young adults was the first of its kind ever offered at the University. Classes were very small. "I found the students to be of high calibre and with a serious interest in the field of librarianship. Teaching in such circumstances and in the beautiful facilities of the Faculty of Social Sciences, where the library school is housed, made this aspect of the fellowship a pure pleasure."

Members of Sherif's young adult services class produced the first Icelandic bibliography of popular young adult titles during her tenure. She wrote a brief handbook of children's services that will be translated into Icelandic for the benefit of the country's librarians.

Another pleasure of the fellowship was Reykjavik itself. Although the cost of living was high, Sherif found the city to be very comfortable. "The cultural opportunities, the manageable size of the city, good public transportation, swims in geothermal pools, the wonderful bookstores, the safety—all are aspects of living in Iceland that I will miss." The warm and windy winter weather was a pleasant surprise: Reykjavik is on the same latitude as Fairbanks, but the Gulf Stream gives it a relatively mild climate. "The idea of Icelanders bundled up in parkas is not an accurate one."

In April, Sherif coordinated a three-week-long display of children's books donated by major U.S. publishers at the American Library in the capital. Attendance at the exhibit was high. She reported that teachers, parents, librarians and National Department of Education officials were particularly impressed with the beautifully produced nonfiction for children— this area has been somewhat overlooked by Icelandic publishers. "I think the exhibit may have some long-term impact, because at the present time there are only a few American titles in Icelandic translation other than Nancy Drews, Hardy Boys and Disneys."

Among about 500 titles for children published in Icelandic in this century, approximately 19 have been translations of American children's classics. The Library Fellow arranged for a smaller exhibit of American children's books with Nordic settings or by Nordic authors to be displayed at the library of Norraenna Husid, an international cultural center in Reykjavik jointly operated by Iceland, Greenland, the Faroe Islands, Finland and the Scandinavian countries.

Before the end of the University term, Sherif had presented several in-service workshops to librarians and had also met with many elementary and high school librarians from Reykjavik. "The high school librarians were very lively and seemed to display a commitment to networking that I observed at few other places in Iceland. The contacts I made led to several library visits and left me with pleasant memories of the outstanding 'esprit de corps' of this group."

Other workshops on library services for children and young adults and a few independent camping trips took the Library Fellow to all the major inhabited areas of Iceland, including Akureyri, the second largest city, and the volcanic areas of the Westmann Islands. "Because little emphasis has been placed on programming in Icelandic school and public libraries, I had no difficulty finding interested audiences for my workshops."

Sue Sherif, a public services librarian at Fairbanks (Alaska) North Star Borough Public Library, traveled to the University of Iceland, Reykjavik. She stayed from January through June 1992.

At a three-day course for public and school librarians, the Library Fellow explained to a somewhat skeptical audience that summer reading programs are successful in Alaska, even though—just as in Iceland—summer days are long and warm and people want to be outside as much as possible after the difficult winters. Some students were enthusiastic and planned to experiment with summer reading programs in 1993. "But just days before I was to leave Iceland, I heard a report that one brave student of mine had inaugurated a summer reading club for children in a suburban public library. At her first session, she attracted 8 children, at the second session, 25, and at the third, 75! This was in a town near Reykjavik of fewer than two thousand people."

Near the end of her fellowship, Sherif was invited by Icelandic colleagues to attend a conference of Nordic librarians in Jarvenpaa, Finland. Also at the June conference were librarians from the newly independent Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. "I learned that the concerns of these librarians are similar to ours; foremost among them are maintaining library funding in an uncertain economic future and creating meaningful networks with the emerging nations of Europe and Asia." A postconference trip to Tallinn, Estonia, offered an eye-opening look at the difficulties faced by libraries in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. "In comparison, our financial and operational problems are small indeed."

Summing up the goals of her fellowship, Sherif explained, "One of the things I tried to teach Icelandic library students and librarians was that librarians, particularly those in isolated places, will never be able to accomplish what they'd like if they think of themselves as alone or remote. It is only when they work together that they can accomplish the goals that funding and time constraints make difficult. This fellowship helped me to learn the lesson I was trying to teach."

Dr. Sigrun Klara Hannesdottir, associate professor at the University and Sherif's host, thanked the Library Fellow for her contribution to libraries in Iceland: "It has been very enjoyable to see how well Icelandic librarians and others who work with children have received the ideas you have presented and are now eager to start testing them in our libraries."

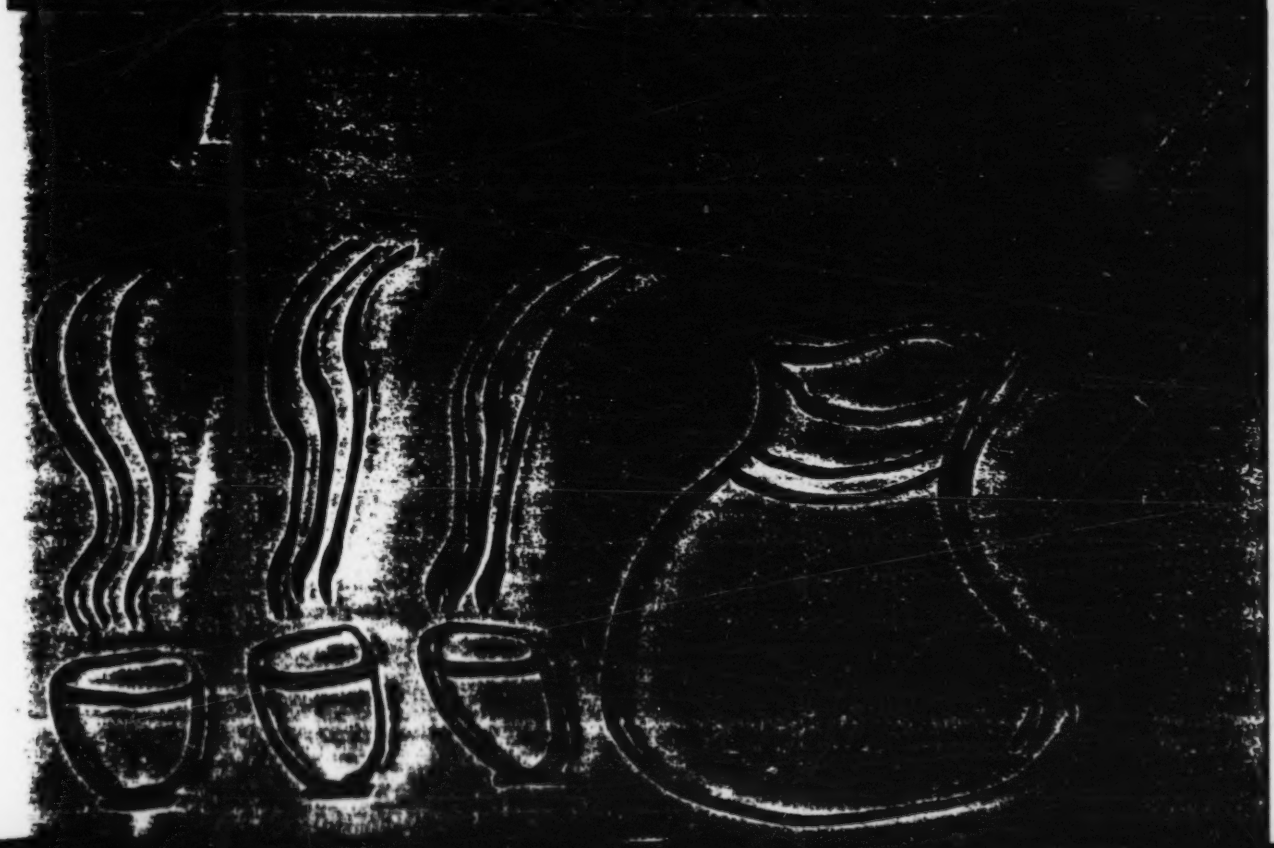
When Library Fellow Gloria Fulton arrived in Belgrade in September 1991, there was still hope that volatile ethnic conflicts in the republics of Slovenia, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro would be resolved and a full-scale civil war would be averted in the former Yugoslavia. A message from the U.S. Embassy described the situation to her succinctly: "The Embassy has determined that Belgrade for now is safe for the American community. . . I'm sure you'll understand that this could change very quickly, depending on events in Croatia and other areas." Librarians in the city assured Fulton that even though there was fighting among the armed forces, the library community wanted to work together. The human and national tragedy that followed affected her fellowship profoundly.

Originally slated to work in Belgrade from September through December 1991 and June through August 1992, Fulton could not return to Serbia for the second part of her fellowship because of the war. Her four months in the capital were professionally productive and personally rewarding, but the escalating hostilities cast a constant shadow over the daily life of the city. "The hardest thing for me to deal with was the increasing depression experienced and expressed by many of my colleagues. . . . They literally found it difficult to keep their minds on their work."

Belgrade was not near the frontlines of the battle, however, and Fulton embarked upon her fellowship assignment with optimism and high expectations. Fluent in Serbian and Croatian, she had done postgraduate work in Zagreb, Croatia, and had visited the country — particularly Croatia — many times. "I was well versed in the history and culture of the Serbian people and welcomed the opportunity not only to visit this republic but also to live and work there."

The local library community greeted the Library Fellow warmly. She soon discovered that a regular part of every working day was drinking a pot of Turkish coffee with colleagues and often discussing the political situation. "The fact that I had a number of interests directly related to Yugoslavia, such as finding out about various writers, folk music, food, and national architecture, was a great ice breaker." She was amazed at the number of librarians who were poets, writers, and philosophers, and on close terms with the leading writers of the country.

GLORIA FULTON



Gloria Fulton, associate librarian, Humboldt State University, Arcata, California went to the City Library of Belgrade, Republic of Serbia. Her fellowship lasted from September through December 1991.

Besides the City Library of Belgrade—the host institution named in the original fellowship proposal—Fulton found herself working with three other libraries on an ambitious national networking project that had been in development for several years. The National Library of Serbia, the University of Belgrade library, and the Biblioteka Matice Srpske in Novi Sad were the other major participants. "The four libraries had put much thought into making my assignment an interesting one. The project seemed almost too good to be true—to be involved in an information networking project in an environment of multiple writing systems and numerous languages, with data collection centers in various republics."

During her first weeks in Serbia, Fulton was able to see how the network functioned. She found an impressive and sophisticated set-up that featured nearly 70 access points, Boolean searching capabilities, and rapid response time. "It was a versatile system that used a shared database for cataloging and inquiry, was capable of handling multiple languages and scripts (both Cyrillic and Latin), and had local systems with features we associate with integrated systems in our own country." Librarians at the National Library were continuing to work on a multilingual thesaurus project designed to solve some of the authority needs of the system.

Unfortunately, the main database, central processor, and software for the network were located in Maribor, Slovenia, and communication lines ran through Croatia to Serbia. In September, the communication lines were severed and remained so throughout the Library Fellow's tenure in Belgrade. "Every day brought more news that seemed to work against the kind of human cooperation that makes networks possible....To their credit is the fact that librarians in both Slovenia and Serbia wanted to continue their collaboration on the project," she reported.

Unable to proceed further with work on the national network, Fulton concentrated on fulfilling another assignment: visiting as many libraries as possible to advise them on current library practice in the U.S. She has extensive experience in both public and technical services in academic libraries, with particular expertise in automated information systems. "I went to national, public, special, university departmental, and even ecclesiastical libraries, in addition to the four major libraries I worked with."

After talking with librarians and drinking the ever present strong Turkish coffee, the Library Fellow would examine online files, card catalogs, stacks, preservation facilities, and beautiful manuscript collections, and study the software solutions libraries had devised for various problems. She later observed, "The best of librarians in Yugoslavia are as good as the best librarians anywhere, and there were many in this category."

In every library Fulton visited, she saw serious space problems. One and a half million volumes are squeezed into the "Svetozar Markovic" Library of the University of Belgrade, which was built with Carnegie funds to hold 300,000 volumes. "I was sitting in that library during an earthquake and realized how ironic it would be for a Californian to be buried in the rubble of a Carnegie library in Yugoslavia." Problems with space also affected access to library collections. Many overcrowded libraries shelve books by "signatura," a shelf arrangement by size. Browsing by subject in stacks areas was therefore impossible, and since lighting was kept low in libraries to save energy, reading was difficult. "The increased use of online catalogs is a bright spot in this scenario, since some possibility for serendipity can be restored through browsing by UDC number."

Because of the banking crisis caused by the war, hard currency funds for libraries had been cut drastically, causing wholesale cancellation of periodical subscriptions. The only alternative for most libraries, the Library Fellow explained, was to set up exchange agreements with libraries abroad in the hopes of getting desired publications. Exchange was also one of the principal methods for acquiring foreign imprints.

Another important part of Fulton's fellowship activities in Belgrade was a series of public lectures. On a number of occasions, she spoke in Serbian about such topics as OCLC and its use in the Humboldt State University Library, local networks at Humboldt State, the American Library Association, and library education in the U.S. Her talks usually drew an audience of some 50 to 100 people, many of whom had questions afterwards.

As Fulton left Belgrade, knowing that her return in June 1992 was in doubt, she spoke of the Book Fellows post as a high point of her library career. "I found that I was a very welcome guest in the libraries I worked with and was treated almost like visiting royalty....In their zeal to ensure that I missed nothing 'truly Serbian,' my hosts treated me to virtually every Serbian national dish and gave me folk music cassettes, icons, homemade brandy, and all manner of books, prints, and maps." She told friends that her only real danger had been from overeating—especially during the "slava and sausage" season in November and December.

"My Serbian colleagues were among the finest people I have ever met," Fulton said. "The political turmoil made the lives of almost all of them very difficult, and I wish that I could have done more to help the situation. However, the attachments I made there will be of value to me personally and professionally for a long time to come. One can only hope that a solution will be found that will enable the people of that country to coexist in harmony."

Library Fellow Debra McKern saw her first ancient Egyptian monument while she was stalled in traffic on a highway overpass leading into Cairo. "We could just see the top of Ramses peeking over the guardrail." During a challenging seven-month fellowship at the National Library of Egypt (Dar al-Kutub), McKern managed to visit many of the tombs and temples in Upper Egypt. She often wondered how the pollution in Cairo and other cities was affecting the centuries-old structures, but as an expert on preservation of library materials, she was preoccupied with an entirely different problem: How could the collections of the National Library, which include rare Arabic papyri and gold-embellished illuminated manuscripts of the Koran, best be preserved?

Dar al-Kutub was the first national library to be established in the Middle East. Founded in 1870, its collection initially consisted of manuscripts gathered from mosques, shrines, educational institutions, endowments and government offices throughout the country. Many rare books have been donated by members of the Egyptian Royal Family over the years. Among the Library's most precious holdings are early printed Korans from an era when Islamic law restricted use of the printing press.

Now a deposit library for Egyptian publications, Dar al-Kutub owns some 1.5 million volumes, including 65,000 manuscripts and 3,000 papyri, as well as coins, printed music, and other media. "There are also artifacts such as a grain of wheat containing the names of all the rulers of Egypt—an interesting preservation (and cataloging) challenge." Preservation activities are carried out in the Restoration Center. After talking to staff at the Center, McKern remarked, "They obviously care very deeply about efforts to preserve the collections."

DEBRA MCKERN

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Dar al-Kutub is housed in an eight-story, 1970s era building that does not have heating, air conditioning or ventilation systems. In the summer, windows are opened for relief from the heat and the collection is thus exposed to dust, insects, and other dangers. In the winter, temperatures in Cairo can fall to 35 degrees. The Egyptian government is eager to renovate Dar al-Kutub or the Library's former home at Bab al-Khalq (now the Islamic Museum) into a suitable repository for the rare books and manuscripts in the collection.

The Library Fellow's assignment was to survey the Dar al-Kutub collection in terms of preservation needs and priorities, assess environmental conditions in the building, and make recommendations for a preservation policy and improved preservation procedures. In the original fellowship proposal, the importance of the project was stated unequivocally: "This project will provide Egypt with the first steps towards saving some of her most precious properties."

During the first five months of the fellowship, volumes of data were gathered from the collections. McKern used as an assessment tool in the process the preservation needs assessment instrument developed by the Research Libraries Group (RLG). The Library of Congress field office in Cairo offered a good deal of support and advice as well.

Psychrometer readings of the temperature and relative humidity in the Manuscripts Department were taken twice a day for five months. McKern also took a random sampling of 440 volumes from the collection for a condition study. Unable to read Arabic, she had difficulty with the cataloging records at first, but she later said, "I've gotten pretty good at identifying numbers in Arabic by having to decipher so many imprint dates and shelf numbers."

Additional data concerning bibliographic access, security, disaster preparedness, stack maintenance, degree of use, and collection strengths came from meetings with National Library staff, and with scholars from educational institutions throughout the capital, including the American University of Cairo and Cairo University. "I now know where every library in Cairo is located, having visited them all."

"There have been many rewards in my fellowship thus far," McKern reported after six weeks in Egypt. "The Egyptian people are very warm and kind, and I've been exposed to a richness of cultural activities unequalled in my experience." She took part in a guided tour of an important archaeological site in Memphis led by the research team and attended several lectures in Cairo by Middle East scholars, Egyptologists, and artists.

Her hosts had provided the Library Fellow with a spacious apartment in picturesque Zamalek, an island in the middle of the Nile River filled with old villas that have been turned into embassies. "I'm two blocks from a pastry shop with an Austrian chef and next door to a fine arts college," she wrote. "I'm living on what I call the 'P' diet: pita and pastries." On Christmas Day, a regular working day in Egypt, McKern attended the traditional Ceremony of the Carols sung in English and Arabic at All Saints Cathedral in Zamalek, and toured several Coptic churches in old Cairo.

By February, the focus of the preservation needs assessment at Dar al-Kutub was shifting from data collection to data analysis. The 440-volume sample of the collection received the most attention at this point. "Much staff energy was expended in documenting where the materials were housed and how they were accessed." All completed survey data was analyzed according to the RLG needs assessment model, modified for the Dar al-Kutub project.

While the data analysis was underway, McKern was involved in other projects as well. She drafted a brochure and prepared a very successful preservation exhibit for the first reception of the newly formed Friends of the National Library. At a meeting of Dar al-Kutub staff, librarians from the Cairo area, and Fulbright scholars, she spoke about preservation problems in libraries.

Before leaving Cairo in late April, McKern transcribed a large volume of preservation assessment data for the National Library. In her illustrated, comprehensive final report, she indicated that 79 items, or 18 percent of the sample, were top priorities for preservation treatment because of their condition and high value. "Given a book population of 1.2 million volumes, this means a total of 216,000 volumes are in great danger. Eighty-one percent of these items are housed in the Manuscripts Department, Special Libraries, or the Royal Library." Seventeen percent of the sample (or a projected 204,000 volumes) were judged to be in stable condition and appropriate candidates for mass deacidification.

The Library Fellow recommended that Dar al-Rutub make environmental controls, disaster preparedness, and stack maintenance its top three preservation priorities. "Better housing is needed to prevent or retard further damage to the collections. By placing the emphasis on prevention rather than treatment, the cost per volume is lower and some items are saved that otherwise might be destroyed." She also suggested organizational changes that would improve the Library's ability to obtain funding and would create departments such as Collection Management and Special Collections to deal with preservation centrally. Finally, a phased approach to preservation was advised: phase I—little or no-cost activities (e.g., translate preservation standards and guidelines into Arabic); phase 2—smaller, stand-alone projects (e.g., conduct care and handling workshops for staff and users); and phase 3—large-scale projects (e.g., conduct a retrospective microfilming project for newspapers/journals).

In her report, McKern acknowledged the dozens of people in Cairo and the U.S. who had contributed support throughout her study. "Many thanks to those in Cairo who became my friends during the project. So many kindnesses were extended to me that it is impossible to enumerate them. I will carry with me fond memories of my time in Egypt."

Debra McKern, former preservation officer at Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia went to the National Library of Egypt, Cairo. She stayed from October 1991 through April 1992.

STANLEY A. ELMAN

Library Fellow Stanley A. Elman called his thirteen-month fellowship at the National Library of Poland (Biblioteka Narodowa) "the crowning achievement" of a thirty-five-year library career. "I hope that I was able to help them a bit," he modestly remarked. From the point of view of Dr. Stanislaw Czajka, director of the Biblioteka Narodowa (BN), Elman's commitment and dedication to the Library's concerns, especially its automation strategy, had inspired the appreciation and respect of the entire staff. For his efforts, Elman was presented with a certificate naming him "an honorary member of the BN staff."

Dr. Czajka requested that the Library Fellow stay on after his fellowship ended. Elman agreed to continue his work in Warsaw for two months, living in guest quarters provided by the Library. He turned down the small stipend also offered by the BN and proposed instead to cover his own expenses. "I was flattered to be invited to extend my stay and did so gladly on my own. It was both an honor and a privilege to serve the BN." Both of Elman's parents were born in Poland and emigrated to the U.S. in 1907. They taught their children the Polish language and culture.

Helping to select an integrated online library system for the BN was the culmination of a varied and productive fellowship year in Warsaw for Elman. Upon arriving in the Polish capital, he had discovered that teaching courses in library automation and integrated systems would not be his first priority, as indicated in the fellowship proposal. Rather, the National Library was proceeding on automation, although a state financial crisis and the resulting uncertainty surrounding the monthly operating budget tempered progress somewhat.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Stanley A. Elman is a retired library systems specialist from Pasadena, California. His fellowship took him to The National Library of Poland, Warsaw. He stayed from September 1991 through October 1992.

Administrators wanted the Library Fellow to refine the Library's proposals to foundations for system funding and to analyze the use of all in-house computing facilities. Identifying and arranging for demonstrations of potential integrated library systems was another priority. He also helped organize two groups that would determine automation policy in the BN, an Automation Committee and a smaller Automation Steering Committee, and met with each on a regular basis.

The BN employs some 900 people—many of them with degrees in library or computer science. It has just moved into a new building with more than 15 acres of floor space and a capacity of nearly 250,000 cubic meters. "The huge new building was a pleasant and surprising sight to see," Elman said. Eventually, the twelve-story repository at the site will hold 5 million volumes. The new Library features guest rooms with an adjoining kitchen and TV room for visiting librarians and scholars, and Elman was able to live there until he found an apartment near the BN.

Although the National Library of Poland was not officially established until 1928, Elman explained, "the idea of a national Polish library dates back to 1747, when the brothers Zaluski founded and opened to the public in Warsaw one of the first libraries in the world that attempted to fulfill the tasks of a national library." In 1794, the Zaluski Library was confiscated by tsarist forces and taken to St. Petersburg, Russia. From that period until 1928, the libraries of wealthy Polish landowners served as quasi-national libraries.

Early in his assignment, a terrible cold put Elman in bed for five days. "While I was laid up, the secretary of the Library's deputy director, her daughter, and their dog came every afternoon with soup and food! This was a completely unsolicited and spontaneous gesture." Similar expressions of warmth, helpfulness, and encouragement from colleagues and other friends and acquaintances were common throughout his fellowship. On All Saints' Day, when Poles traditionally place flowers on their relatives' graves, Elman went by train and taxi to Auschwitz, the former concentration camp that is now a museum, to lay some flowers at the crematorium. "Hundreds of thousands of people died there, including many of our professional library colleagues. I feel it was the least I could do to honor their memories."

Towards the end of 1991, with Polish government money, the Library bought 22 PCs, four printers, a CD-ROM drive, and two modems, and installed a local area network (LAN). It received gifts of an IBM-compatible PC with a color monitor and many software packages, a CD-ROM changer and several discs, including the LITA and LISA databases, and other discs from Richard Greenfield, a former Library Fellow to India, and from various sources. A welcome bonus was the donation of an IBM 4381 computer to the BN from University of Notre Dame, Elman's alma mater. Robert Miller, the director of Notre Dame's Library and a visiting professor at the University of Warsaw in the spring of 1992, engineered the gift, and LOT the Polish National Airline agreed to transport it free from Chicago to Warsaw.

Elman arranged for demonstrations of GEAC, DYNIX, VTLS, ALEPH and several other integrated library systems at the BN throughout the year. And with a grant from the Andrew K. Mellon Foundation, he began to plan a month-long tour of libraries and inspection of integrated library systems in the U.S. by six BN librarians. To aid communication with libraries in Europe and the rest of the world, Elman helped the BN acquire BITNET capability through an account with the European Academic Research Network (EARN) branch at the University of Warsaw.

The Library Fellow took full advantage of the rich cultural life of the Old World capital. With his wife Carolyn Elman, who visited him several times, he attended operas, ballets, plays, and concerts. "There are many excellent theatres in Warsaw, including four in the Palace of Culture and Science, and the plays are superb. I plan to see Shakespeare in Polish before I leave." The couple also went to museums in the historic "old town" section of the city, including Zamek Krolewski (the King's Castle) on Castle Square.

At the end of April, the serious illness of his wife required Elman to return to the U.S. on very short notice. Fortunately, she felt well again after only 10 days and urged her husband to return to his work at the BN. He arrived back in Warsaw on May 8th, the feast of St. Stanislaus. In Poland, namedays are celebrated instead of birthdays, and Stanley Elman was feted with flowers, cakes, and cookies upon his return.

During the last half of his fellowship, Elman concentrated on teaching two seminars for BN staff. One was on preparing requests for proposals for integrated library systems. "The graduates of this class will be the nucleus of a group that will prepare and evaluate RFPs and select an integrated system for the BN," he said at the time. The other seminar—for a small group of librarians selected by the deputy director—had as its purpose the analysis of BN automation needs and the creation of an automation plan with recommendations for the future. As a result of the small group seminar, a 110-page systems analysis with suggestions for organizational changes and detailed strategies for automation was presented to the BN Director. It recommended that the Library consider a turnkey integrated library system rather than create its own system in-house, and called for detailed descriptions of system functions and of the structure and content of all BN bibliographic records, databases, and collections for an RFP.

As his fellowship came to an end, Elman was preparing to lead BN librarians on a tour of U.S. libraries in November 1992. "During this fellowship, I tried to share some of my experience and expertise and a little knowledge," he reflected. "I think I opened some windows and let in some enthusiasm for computerization and automation and provided the BN with some new international contacts and new approaches to library problem solving." Elman has agreed to return to the BN in February of 1993 to help prepare the RFPs and evaluate vendor responses.

During her first visit to Israel in the summer of 1959, Barbara Rush was on her way to Eilat, the site of King Solomon's mines, when she stopped for a cold drink at a lone kiosk in Mitzpe Ramon, an isolated settlement in the midst of the desert. "Never in my wildest imagination did I think that I would ever be involved in the cultural or educational life of this place," she later said. But as a 1991-92 Library Book Fellow, Rush found herself teaching at Kaye Teachers' College in Beer Sheva; the Biblical gateway to the desert, where many of the students are from Mitzpe Ramon.

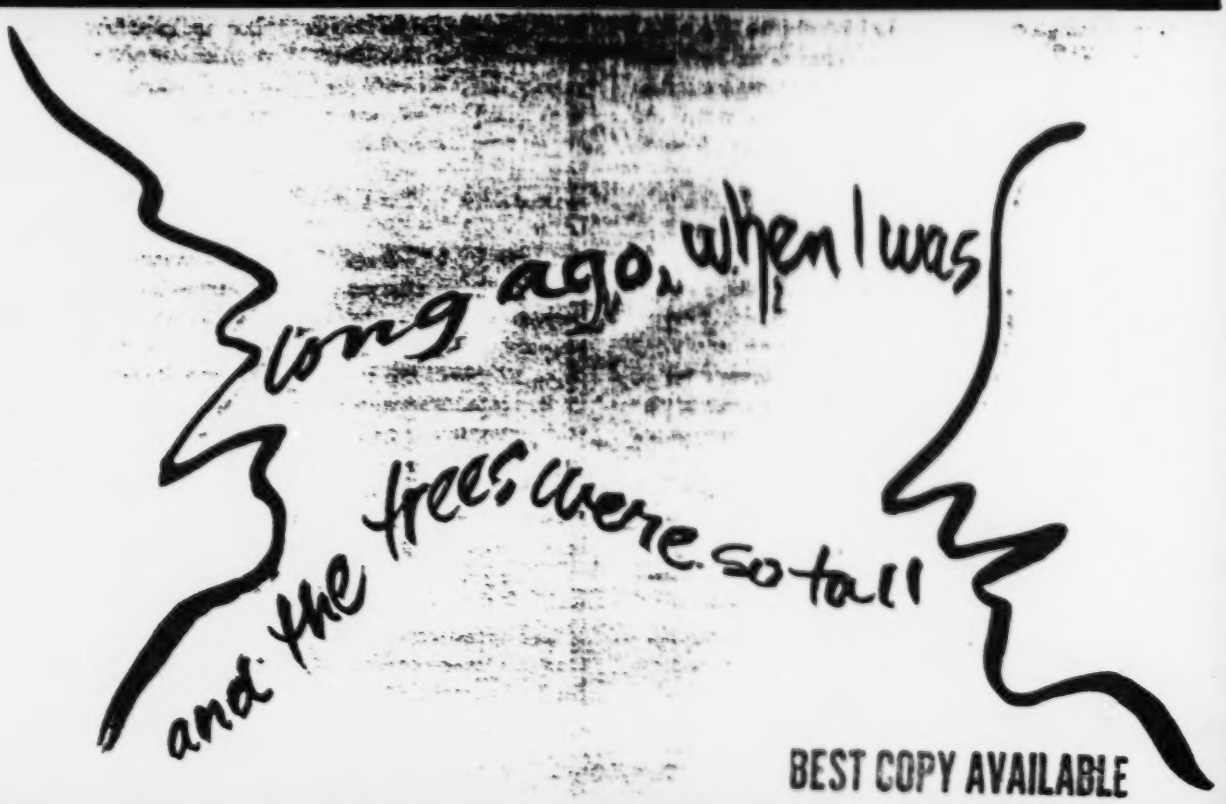
At the request of her hosts, the Library Division of Israel's Ministry of Education and Culture, Rush taught two courses in the library education program of the college: school library management and activities, and storytelling. Her students were public librarians and teacher-librarians who live in cooperative agricultural settlements (moshavim and kibbuzim) or in small cities in the desert. "Kaye Teachers' College is an interesting place, serving as a training center for Jews and Bedouins alike; a beautiful modern building houses a magnificent and up-to-date library," she wrote.

Elementary school libraries are just beginning to be developed in Israel, and there is as yet no official government policy mandating them. Therefore, a wide variation in school library quality exists. In many places, public and school libraries are one and the same and are located in the schools.

Rush's assignment at Kaye Teachers' College had originally been one segment of a fellowship proposal that also involved teaching at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem for some terms. Because two highly qualified U.S. librarians applied for the position—Barbara Rush and Marjorie Rosenthal (see separate profile on Rosenthal)—the fellowship was divided. This was the first time in the history of the ALA/USIA program that a fellowship was handled in such a manner.

Rush and her husband lived in Jerusalem during her fellowship and she journeyed to Beer Sheva by bus, a five- to six-hour round trip on six different vehicles. "My greatest frustration is not being able to multiply myself several times so that I can devote even more time to needed library projects," she said after a few months. News about the Library Fellow's storytelling and teaching expertise spread quickly throughout Israel's small library community and she had many opportunities to become involved in other school library projects.

BARBARA RUSH



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

One of the most satisfying of these was a course at the Pedagogical Center in Tel Aviv for teacher-librarians working in schools that serve emotionally troubled or low-functioning teenagers. At first reluctant to undertake the course because she had little experience in this area, Rush worked together with the teacher-librarians to creatively expand library services. She discarded her prepared teaching materials as inappropriate and responded completely to the special needs of these teacher-librarians whom she described as remarkable "for their creativity and dedication." The focus for the course became the use of folktales to better understand the many ethnic groups living in Israel. "I was absolutely thrilled to see every student bloom in storytelling technique and to see the dialogue and sharing that went on in terms of possibilities for library service. I considered this course the greatest challenge and the greatest accomplishment of my fellowship period." Rush also taught storytelling to elementary school librarians in Tel Aviv for five weeks.

In Jerusalem, the Library Fellow "adopted" Givat Gonen, a school with grades one through twelve, as a pilot location for a variety of storytelling projects with students, teachers, and librarians. With Library Fellow Marjorie Rosenthal, she consulted with the English Teachers' Association in Jerusalem about school libraries and conducted a storytelling workshop at the group's annual conference. The Jerusalem English Language Library for Youth (JELLY) also invited Rush to speak, and throughout her time in the city she advised small groups of parents from JELLY about using picture books with young children and encouraging older children to read.

Rush's busy schedule early in her fellowship coincided with the worst winter Israel has had in decades. "I was twice snowed out of lectures since there was no transportation out of Jerusalem, and I had the opportunity to see the city blanketed with snow, beautifully dressed like a bride." With the welcome spring thaw came flowers and sunshine. "The city has a new flavor, much of which revolves around outdoor cafes and markets and cultural events in the beautiful parks," she wrote. "It's a time to enjoy walking in the many Arab, Christian, and Jewish ethnic neighborhoods whose blend of customs, beliefs, and folklore give Jerusalem an aura unlike that of any other city....As the city bloomed, so my library activities began to grow as well."

During the second half of the semester at Kaye Teachers' College, Rush's students began to apply some of the ideas they had learned in class to their own work situations. "In the school library course, I began to see things 'coming together,' with a good deal of sharing of materials and ideas. In the second course, students increased their understanding of storytelling and broadened their own repertoires." She was especially grateful to Mr. Aaron Morielli, director of the college library, for his help with materials and other administrative details, "and for making sure that I had that all-important taxi ride to the bus station!"

Throughout her fellowship, Rush visited libraries all over Israel. One of the newest was the beautiful and modern Arab library in East Jerusalem, which serves a large public and school population. "Mr. Ghaleb Abul-Haj, the head librarian, was gracious enough to give me a detailed tour." There was also a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the National Library. "Simple arithmetic indicates the library was founded more than half a century before the State of Israel, an indication of the importance of books and reading to this population," Rush observed.

A highlight of the spring for Rush was an invitation to share her ideas at Israel's only course for professional storytellers, held in Tel Aviv. She was pleased at the positive reception she received from the country's finest storytellers and directors. At a subsequent storytelling evening in Jaffa, Tel Aviv's sister city, the atmosphere was magical. "After a lovely fish dinner at the port, we retired to a charming old Arab building with high ceilings and arches where storytelling students told tales from the lands that Jews went to after their expulsion from Spain 500 years ago. The stories were beautifully related, and the entire evening was quite unforgettable."

Shortly before her fellowship ended, Rush took part in two events that had great meaning to her. She shared stories of the U.S. at "an intimate and warm storytelling evening" for adults at the American Cultural Center in Jerusalem, where eighty people squeezed into a room that holds thirty. Also, response to her lecture on the power of stories to 400 school librarians at their annual conference at Bar Ilan University was overwhelmingly positive. "The thrust of my talk was that when telling a story, be it a tale written or heard or a tale from life's experience, one never knows what effect that story will have on the life of the listener, and that we must all find the storyteller within ourselves and tell our stories. Imagine my satisfaction on the bus trip back to Jerusalem when the entire bus was busy sharing stories."

Victor Ben Naim, director of the Libraries Division of the Ministry of Education and Culture, said the Library Fellow's work had opened many eyes to the possibilities of school library services and the importance of school libraries to the educational scene. "Mrs. Rush's experience and knowledge were very valuable to us. The feedback from her students was extremely positive."

Rush herself reflected, "Being a Fellow has been a rewarding experience that I would not have missed, both in terms of what I was able to give and what I learned from so many others who are dedicated to the library profession and who are offering service in less-than-ideal situations. I feel that my presence here enabled training to be brought to locations and educational settings where none or very little would have taken place. As for storytelling, I now see storytelling courses/workshops being requested in every corner of the country. So I do feel that my being here has made a difference! And, perhaps most important, I've made life-long friends!"

Barbara Rush, a retired school library-media specialist and professional storyteller from Commack, New York went to the Libraries Division, Ministry of Education, Jerusalem, Israel. Her fellowship lasted from December 1991 through July 1992.

Library Fellow Deborah Abraham arrived in Calcutta in the midst of Durga Puja, a week-long festival held in honor of Durga, West Bengal's mother goddess. From late afternoon to early morning, the streets of the already crowded city were brightly lit and packed with people making their way to temporary pavilions made of bamboo and cheesecloth. Inside the pavilions, images of Durga and her companions dressed in splendid costumes stood in traditional poses. At the week's end, all of these fantastic creations were thrown into the river, signifying that they are now part of the continuous cycle of life.

"Calcutta is a city that grows on you," Abraham wrote in her first project report. "Of Indian cities, it has the most severe problems of population growth, environmental pollution, and aging infrastructure... but its citizens know the problems well and are willing to help." Her six-month fellowship was spent at the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta (IIMC), a school for postgraduate study and research in management sciences.

located about 15 miles south of the city. Throughout her time in India, Abraham said, the IIMC campus was a refuge from the urban scene, "a green oasis, complete with lake, flower gardens, topical birds, and pathways for pleasant evening walks."

Founded in 1961, the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta, was the first of four such institutes created to train the next generation of India's business leaders. The Institute's B. C. Roy Library has a strong current periodicals collection, some 100,000 books, and large collections of government documents, annual reports, and other special publications.

Because foreign software for automated systems is difficult to support in India and because the exchange rates make it expensive, the B. C. Roy Library created an in-house integrated online library system. Eventually, records will be transferred to CALIBNET, a citywide library network that will include Calcutta's university and institute libraries and the National Library.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

DEBORAH V. H. ABRAHAM

Supported by the Indian government, CALIBNET should serve as a model for other cities. Software to support CALIBNET is available in a first version and the network planners are now grappling with such issues as governance and retrospective conversion. One of Abraham's assignments was to assist them with system development. "I was privileged to present a paper to the network's planning workshop for retroconversion and to participate in their lively deliberations," she reported early in her fellowship.

The Library Fellow's other major assignments were to help implement the automated system at the B. C. Roy Library and train library staff in computer applications. Abraham has had a good deal of experience in systems analysis and implementation both in her work at the Brookline Public Library and from courses taken toward an MBA degree.

Reorganization of a workhorse IBM PX XT computer and refinement of the order and acquisition modules of the automated system were the first priorities at the B. C. Roy Library. "The arduous task of downloading the IBM XT files, reformatting the hard disk, and upgrading the operating system proceeded slowly in the face of electrical disruptions and equipment failures," Abraham reported. In spite of these interruptions, during her first three months at the Institute she trained two librarians in general PC operations and in dBase III Plus on a PC designated for staff instruction.

Abraham and Library Director Asok Mukhopadhyay, from whom she received enthusiastic support, refined the user interface of the Library's order and acquisitions module and de-bugged and tested the software. "The staff at the IIMC has been responsive and helpful," she remarked. "The possibilities for computer use and staff interest are so great that it has been difficult to focus on only a few projects."

Word of the Library Fellow's presence traveled quickly through India's library community and she was approached by a number of libraries for help with system development. At the American Research Studies Center in Hyderabad, Abraham talked about requirements of turnkey systems; she advised the All India Association of Christian Higher Education on automating a new special library. "These consultations acquainted me with the great variety of libraries in India and the librarians that make them possible....My only regret is that I could not accept more invitations."

In her travels around the country for both business and pleasure, Abraham was able to visit many sites for which India is renowned. "The Taj Mahal was everything I expected and more—it is massive and delicate at the same time....An elephant ride to the top of the Ajmer Fort and a quiet walk to Raj Ghat, where Gandhi is buried, were unforgettable." Getting to these places on a wide selection of transportation modes was as much a part of the experience as the destination, she said. "Each experience illuminated for me a little more of a vast and varied country."

During the last half of Abraham's fellowship, much progress was made on the library's automated system and staff training, although problems with equipment and electricity continued to plague the project. An ailing computer disk drive intermittently disrupted an ambitious schedule of training for six staff members. After several rebuilt drives failed, a good one was found that worked perfectly for the final two months Abraham was at the Institute. "In a way, the PC's problems taught my students to be resourceful. They learned to try more than one method to complete a task and to check equipment and consult with each other before requesting a service call." In the end, the six staff members had among them learned dBase, some programming, DOS, and WordPerfect—skills that will aid the Roy Library in completing its online system and making the transition to network membership. The practical teaching projects given to them by Abraham also resulted in useful bibliographies, lists, mailings, and labels.

Deborah V. H. Abraham is head of the Reference Department at Brookline Public Library, Brookline, Massachusetts. From October through April 1992, she worked at the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta.

A working version of the order and acquisitions module for the integrated system was completed one week before the Library Fellow left India. Testing the module was difficult because sample files were corrupted and open program files damaged by electrical failures. But completing it was worthwhile, she decided. "For me, it provided an opportunity to learn a good deal about programming by concentrating on a single program." Abraham also helped Director Mukhopadhyay design dBase programs for the cataloging and circulation modules of the system.

Over the months of her fellowship, Abraham had talked informally with CALIBNET software developers about the concerns and requirements of library networks. Days before her departure, the network development team went over several software modules with IIMC personnel, including the Library Fellow. "We noted important features as well as needed enhancements," she reported. "Communications between systems developers and librarians has its difficulties anywhere in the world. It is my hope that I contributed to the dialogue with a question, an example, or an idea."

Abraham presented to Library Director Mukhopadhyay and to the Institute's Director Sudip Chowdhury a final report and recommendations for staff training, management and acquisition of equipment and software, and development of both the in-house and network systems, supported by upgraded equipment and uninterupted power supply. "The Library Fellowship program has been exceptional in that it has provided a true exchange of skills and experience," she said at the report's conclusion. Later correspondence with the B. C. Roy Library confirmed that the new acquisitions module was in operation and the Library was anticipating the installation of network software.

"I experienced in Calcutta an urgency to accomplish something of substance," Abraham wrote of her fellowship. "At the same time, my most important role was as a catalyst for change. These objectives are often difficult to combine." She spoke warmly of the friendship of the many librarians she had met during her six months in India. "They were remarkably open about the professional challenges they face, adding to my understanding of libraries in the country. The fellowship helped me to use my professional capabilities as never before."

ALA SEEKS U.S. HOSTS

Building on the success of the Library Fellows Program and broadening the program's scope, the United States Information Agency (USIA) increased program funding for 1993 to place international library professionals at U.S. libraries. As the preceeding pages highlight, the program currently places ten to fourteen U.S. library professionals each year in institutions overseas for periods of three to twelve months. Additional funding from USIA will be used for "reverse exchanges."

The program's objectives are to provide an opportunity for incoming fellows to enhance their understanding of contemporary librarianship as practiced in the U.S., develop new areas of expertise, and establish contacts with American colleagues that will lead to enduring professional and institutional relationship.

It is anticipated the first international library fellows will begin their work assignments in Fall 1993, after completing an orientation program. Fellows' assignments will vary, depending upon their interests and the interests of the U.S. host-institutions but assignments might include: provision of reference or technical services, library administration, or community outreach.

Criteria for selection of the U.S. host-institutions will be: appropriate match of professional interests; assurance of a staff mentor to assist fellow with orientation and on-the-job questions; availability of non-credit educational opportunities and no- or low-cost housing. The U.S. staff mentor will receive all expenses reimbursed in attending the orientation session.

Fellows will be provided an annual salary of $32,000 prorated for the fellowship length. Travel expenses to and from the U.S. and some in-country travel will be covered by the program. In addition, health insurance is provided as well as facilitative assistance with visas, social security, and taxes.

USIA criteria for selection of incoming fellows are: degree in library science (or accepted local equivalent); appropriate library experience; fluency in English; quality and feasibility of proposal and potential value of the exchange to support the program goals.

U.S. libraries interested in hosting an international fellow should contact: Robert P. Doyle, director, Library Fellows Program, American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611 (800-545-2433, ext. 3200; FAX 312-944-3897).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Special appreciation also goes to the United States Information Service employees stationed around the globe at U.S. Embassies and in Washington, D.C. Mary Boone, training/exchanges officer, USIA Library Programs Division, and Helen Amabile, deputy chief, USIA Library Programs Division, deserve special thanks for all their facilitative assistance, and their unfailing support in advancing this program.

Finally, in preparing this final report, Susan Brandehoff ably synthesized the reports and the fellows' correspondence to produce this readable and lucid commentary. Natalie Wargin used her exceptional creative skills to design this handsome report showcasing the Fellows' experiences. These individuals made this report possible.

The dedicated assistance of all these people and many more unnamed made these projects successful. While it is difficult to judge the overall effectiveness or lasting significance of these projects, I hope this report provides an honest and lively profile of each Fellows' experience. I know these experiences have enriched and broadened the Fellows. I also hope the experiences have helped to increase international understanding.

Robert P. Doyle

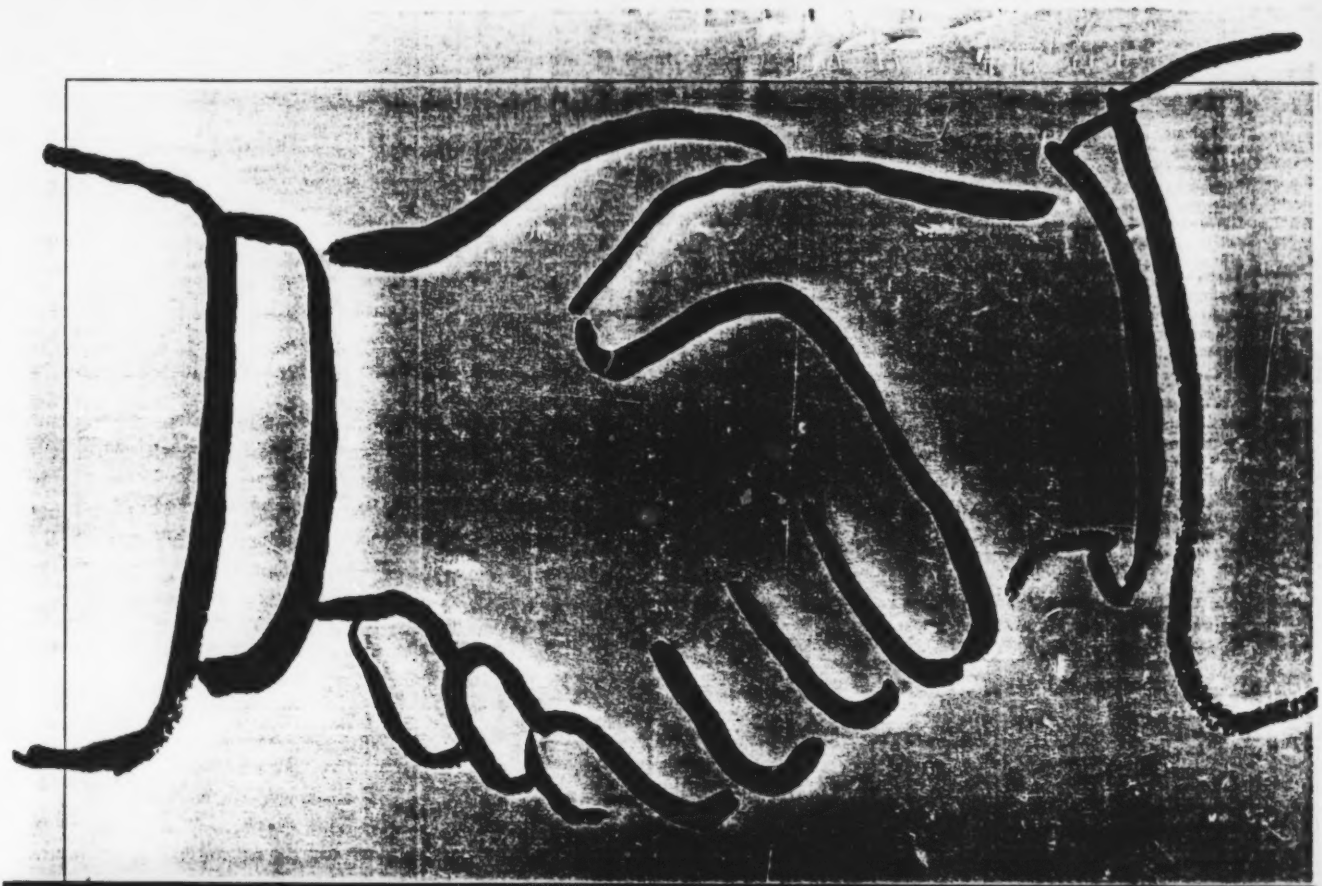
Robert P. Doyle
U.S. Information Ambassadors: 1991-92 Library Fellows
(Chicago: American Library Association, 1993)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report and the program's expansion are a tribute to the adaptable, adventurous, and resilient individuals profiled on the preceding pages. Their creativity and enthusiasm enabled them to succeed in a new environment and make invaluable contributions to international librarianship. They expanded their own horizons and narrowed the gaps in our global village.

The host institutions also deserve special thanks. They opened not only their workplaces, but also their homes and hearts to the Fellows. To name just a few, the following individuals provided outstanding support to the Fellows: Doina Banciu, Central University Library, Bucharest, Romania; Ekaterina Genieva, All State Library of Foreign Literature, Moscow, Russia; Bluma Peritz, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel; Jan Wolosz, National Library of Poland, Warsaw; Asok Mukhopadhyay, Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta; Nelson Larrea, Banco del Libro, La Paz, Bolivia and Beatriz Claros, Ministry of Education and Culture, La Paz, Bolivia; Sigrun Klara Hannesdottir, University of Iceland; Martha Fernandez de Lopez, Colegio de Bibliotecologos del Peru, Lima; Zana Zelcevic, National Library of Serbia, Belgrade; and Miriam Ratsabi, Ministry of Education and Culture, Jerusalem, Israel.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



THE 1991-92 LIBRARY FELLOWS

U.S. INFORMATION AMBASSADORS

The Library Fellows Program
Funded by the United States Information Agency
Administered by the American Library Association

BEST COPY AVAILABLE